

THE TRUTH ABOUT ALIE

A refutation of the claim that falsehood is included in Divine Power



Abu Hasan al-Ridawi



The picture on the cover is from a manuscript of *Sharh Al-Dawwānī ālā Āqīdah al-Aḥudiyyah* from the Diaber collection. The text appears on page 119 of the MS; it is signed 1094 AH and is translated thus:

I say: falsehood is a flaw, and a flaw for Allāh tāālā is muḥāl. It is not included in the mumkināt and neither is it included in Divine Power. And this, just as His Divine Power does not include anything that implies a flaw in Him – exalted is He – like ignorance [jahl] and powerlessness [ájz] or negation of the attribute of Speech or any other attribute of perfection.

Table of Contents

Preface	-----	1
I. In These Difficult Times	-----	2
II. The Issue	-----	5
III. The Sunni View	-----	6
IV. A Primer on Kalām Terminology	-----	9
V. Kalām Terminology: A Summary	-----	15
VI. Is Muḥāl included in Divine Power?	-----	19
VII. Allāh, Most High, is Transcendent from all flaws	-----	23
VIII. Definition of Kadhib	-----	29
IX. Statements of Scholars that Kadhib is Muḥāl	-----	31
X. The Principle of Explosion and the Deobandi Proposition	-----	40
XI. Khulf fi'l Wa'yīd	-----	42
XII. What Sharīf Al-Jurjānī Said	-----	46
XIII. Conclusion	-----	50
Appendix A. Keller's Talk	-----	52
Appendix B. A Clarification	-----	61
Appendix C. Obscure Statements in Books of Kalām	-----	62
Appendix D. Transliteration Table	-----	75
Appendix E. Bibliography	-----	77
Appendix F. Another Deception	-----	80
Appendix G. Shaykh Buti's Statement	-----	81
Afterword	-----	82

The Truth About A Lie



*alḥamdulillāh rabbi'l áālamīn; wa's ṣalātu wa's salāmu álá sayyidi'l anbiyā'a wa'l mursalīn
allāhumma hidayatu'l ḥaqqi wa'ṣ ṣawāb*

Praise be to Allāh táālā, the Lord of the worlds. Salutations and peace be upon our master Muḥammad, the prince of the worlds; and the leader of all prophets and messengers sent to guide the world. O Allāh! We ask thee to guide us to the truth and on the right path.

The most important thing a sensible and a wise person ought to do in these difficult times is to strive to save his own self from eternal hellfire. That is not possible, except by knowing the correct belief and true *tawḥīd*,¹ as described and explained by leaders of the *Ahlu's Sunnah* – scholars and pious gnostics among them.

These are times when people following the true creed and staunchly attesting to the right belief are at ebb; and the seas of ignorance swell. Falsehood² is rampant and threatens to dominate; truth, the truthful and the righteous are under attack from every corner of the earth as waves of depravity gush with all force from all sides.

Alas! How adorned and bedecked are the false and the flawed, the blemished and the fraud!

Truly, fortunate is that person who recognizes the correct creed and immaculate faith and is thus enlightened; his innermost secret is radiant, illuminated by the light of truth. He, who has distanced himself completely from all deviant groups and their evil, until death takes him away, delivered and liberated from this wicked world.

Glory be to Allāh táālā who has inspired us and has given us a clear understanding of such points of belief that few know in our age; and fewer still are scholars who can explain these issues. Allāh táālā has by His Grace, guided us to the right and correct opinion in those matters in which, even those who are considered as knowledgeable and proficient have erred and made blunders; those, whom one does not expect or suspect to make such mistakes.

O Allāh! just as you have favored us with true knowledge, increase it for us and aid us in completing this work by Thy Grace. Grant us a beautiful end and make us join our beloved ones, in the world of peace;³ and do not take away from us, that which You have given us.

O, the seeker of truth! Look into this: read, understand and reflect; and when you recognize the truth, then thank Allāh táālā for bestowing this great fortune upon you; that which was not granted to a multitude of people, and they returned empty-handed with an enormous calamity upon them.⁴

In the following pages are clear and unequivocal statements of masters of the discipline; ponder and reflect. Then, fear not to accept the truth and forsake the lie. Be not among those deceived by glib talkers and the falsifiers. Only Allāh táālā gives success.

¹ *tawḥīd*: belief in One God, Allāh; true and unflinching monotheism.

² corrupt beliefs, *bāṭil*

³ *dār al-amān*

⁴ This is a translation from the preface of *Sharḥ al-Ṣuḥrā* by Imām al-Sanūsī, starting from the first line until here.

I. IN THESE DIFFICULT TIMES

The Messenger of Allāh *ṣallAllāhu ʿalayhi wa ṣallam* foretold of a time when truth and falsehood would be so mixed up that it would be difficult to tell, which is which. And that we would hear of strange things our forebears had never heard of; that mischief and heresies would be widespread and Muslims will come to accept them as true faith, while in reality these would be ideas alien to Islam. In the ḥadīth⁵ of Muslim, narrated by Ḥudhayfah *radīyAllāhu ʿanhū* :

I have heard the Messenger of Allāh *ṣallAllāhu ʿalayhi wa ṣallam* say: 'Heresies⁶ will be presented to [people's] hearts slowly and repeatedly;⁷ and in that heart which accepts it, a dark mark is made; and in the heart which rejects it, a white mark. So much so that, hearts will be of two kinds: the white, like marble - no heresy or evil can harm it, as long as the heavens and earth abide. [The second kind] black: like the tipped over and dirty water jug⁸ - [which] neither recognizes the righteous, nor rejects the evil; except, that fancied by its own desire.

Qādī Iyād explaining⁹ the above says that, 'presented' means, mischief will stick to hearts and leave its trace, like the marks imprinted on the sides of a person who has lain upon a mat, and because of pressing close to the mat. This will occur repeatedly, until it takes firm hold [in hearts]. Or it means: like reeds that are woven one after the other in a mat; so also will heresies take root in hearts, one after the other. The white [heart] like marble, to which dirt does not stick; and a dark [heart] like the soiled water jug, tipped over and nothing remains in it [from goodness].¹⁰

In another ḥadīth¹¹ narrated by Abu Hurayrah *radīyAllāhu ʿanhū* :

RasūlAllāh *ṣallAllāhu ʿalayhi wa ṣallam* said: 'hasten in doing good deeds before heresies (and evil) descend, like the dark parts of the night. A man shall be a Muslim in the morning and becomes an infidel in the evening; a man shall be Muslim in the evening and becomes a kafir by the morning. He shall sell his religion for [success] in this [temporal] world.

Ālī al-Qārī says that the 'dark parts of the night' is a metaphor to explain that heresies will be black, dark and not easily recognizable, such that it becomes difficult to identify and differentiate the right from the wrong.¹²

⁵ *Muslim* 231/144; *Mishkāt al-Maṣābīh*, no.5380.

⁶ *fitan*: pl. or *fitnah* : mischief or evil. In this context, heresies and innovation in belief. [Al-Qārī in *Mirqātu'l Mafātīh*, Vol.10, Pg.405]

⁷ *ūdan ūdā*; Imām Nawawī and Qādī Iyād say that there is a difference of opinion in the declension for this particular phrase; with *dāl* (sans dot) and with *dhāl* (with the dot); also, *āyn* with *naṣb* or with *rafā*. The possible readings mentioned are:

- ūdan ūdā*: like the spinning of individual stalks one by one while making a straw mat.
- āwdan āwdā* : again and again.
- āwdhan āwdhā* : seeking refuge

⁸ The ḥadīth says: *mirbāddan ka'l kūz*; *muj-khiyyan*; Ālī al-Qārī says, like the tipped over water jug, soiled grayish-black and empty. Al-Qārī says **mirbādd** (with kasrah of mim and shaddah of dāl); Qādī Iyād says **murbād** (with ḍammah of mim) is also an accepted variant.

⁹ *Ikmal al-Mūlim*, Vol.1, Pg.453

¹⁰ A metaphor for someone without knowledge or gnosis – neither *ilm* nor *mārifah* (Al-Qārī)

¹¹ *Muslim*, 186-118; *Abu Dāwūd* 4259; *Tirmidhi* 2195; *Ibn Mājah* 3954; *Musnad Imām Ahmed* 2:304.

¹² *Mirqāt al-Mafātīh*, Ālī al-Qārī. Vol.10, Pg.12 Ḥadīth 5383.

We live in times when the truthful are reviled and liars promoted as defenders of truth. Just as it was foretold¹³ by the Messenger *ṣallāllāhu ʿalayhi wa ṣallam* :

..when the truthful are labeled as liars; and liars considered as truthful.

These are times in which people demand proof for even fundamental articles of belief and casually admit opposition, claiming that a difference of opinion exists in such matters. Common folk are misled because knowledge has depleted immensely and the knowledgeable are becoming scarce.

It is necessary for Muslims to be mindful of their religion and not be by wayward men of learning, nor follow them in their blunders. We seek Allāh's refuge and ask for His Aid, and to make the truth apparent to us and guide us in aiding it; and to help us identify falsehood and to reject it; and Allāh's aid is sufficient.

It is an obligation to investigate the correct *ʿaqīdah* and then to follow it. Concerning certain problematic questions, some scholars deliberately ignore them and avoid addressing them, either because they are themselves not aware, or because they are inclined towards a position that cannot be supported with evidence. They confuse common Muslims by vague statements and dismiss such things as unimportant issues.

In *Idā'atu'l Dujnā*¹⁴ by Al-Maqirri:¹⁵

fa'l tārifi'l wājiba wa'l muḥālā
wa jāyizan fi ḥaqqihi tāālā
fa ilmuhā fardun ʿalaynā sharāā
wa mithluhā fi ḥaqqi rusulin tur'āā

Know what is necessary and [what is] impossible

And what is permissible [concerning Attributes] of Allāh tāālā

This knowledge is made obligatory upon us by the *sharīāh*

And also, such knowledge about the Messengers

Imām ʿAbd al-Ghanī an-Nablūsī¹⁶ comments that it is made obligatory by the *sharīāh* to learn these aspects of faith. And to know what is necessary, impossible and possible; on what is allowed or prohibited to say about Allāh tāālā concerning His Attributes.¹⁷

It is necessary to know that certain attributes are impossible for Allāh tāālā. One cannot have a corrupt belief and use the lame excuse of not knowing it in the first place. Because, it is obligatory to learn these things and therefore, necessary for those who know, to disseminate the true *ʿaqīdah* and refute false beliefs.

¹³ From Ibn Mardawīh, in *Ashrāṭ as-Sāāh* by Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd ar-Rasul al-Barzanjī; Pg.169; another narration is by Al-Muāāfā narrating from Abū Yīsā al-Tirmidhī in his *Al-Jalīs al-Anīs*.

¹⁴ *Idā'atu'l Dujnā fi lýtiqādī Ahli's Sunnah*, Pg.13.

¹⁵ Aḥmed al-Maqirri al-Maghribī al-Māliki (992-1041 AH / 1584-1631CE).

¹⁶ ʿAbd al-Ghanī an-Nablūsī is a well-known Ḥanafī scholar and author who passed away in 1143AH.

¹⁷ *Rāyīḥatu'l Jannah Sharḥ Idā'atu'd Dujnā fi lýtiqādī Ahli's Sunnah*, Pg.30.

In a ḥadīth¹⁸ narrated by ʿAbdAllāh ibn ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ, the Prophet *ṣallAllāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

‘How will you be when you will remain [living] among the scum¹⁹ of the people, whose covenants and trusts are all entangled and mixed up? They shall dispute and differ until they become like this’ [the Messenger *ṣallAllāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*] gestured by entwining the fingers [of one hand with the other]. And he said: ‘What do you bid me do?’

He said *ṣallAllāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*: ‘Take what you recognize as right and abandon that which you [recognize as] false. Take care of your own self and leave the doings of the common folk.’

ʿĀlī al-Qārī says in its commentary²⁰ that it means that when such differences arise, it will be difficult to tell the righteous from the evil, the trustworthy from the dishonest; and matters of religion will get entangled and all mixed up.

This paper discusses an irrational issue, which was unknown to Muslims until the recent past. Neither has such a belief validated by reliable scholars of *kalām* or *ʿaqīdah*. Indeed, it is that, which even ancient philosophers and other faiths consider abominable. This was also foretold by RasūlAllāh *ṣallAllāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* when he said:²¹

‘There shall be, among the last ones in my ummah, people who will narrate [those things] which you would not have heard, nor your forefathers. Beware of them!’

Allāh tāālā knows best and only He gives guidance.

Notes:

1. Much of what has been translated seeks to be as close a literal translation as possible. Some phrases in Arabic defy verbatim translations; the translator is forced to convey the meaning in his own words. At this point, it is more important to convey the meaning than merely translating words. In our paper, such instances are rare; but still, the reader is requested to bear this in mind, and evaluate once again, if he feels the translator has not been faithful to the text.
2. Definite articles in transliterated Arabic terms, are omitted as a rule. Thus, *al-wājib al-dhātī* is *wājib dhātī* and *al-mustahīl al-ʿarādī* is *mustahīl ʿarādī*.
3. Quotes selected for this document are mostly obvious and direct quotes. Quotes which do not explicitly address the issue at hand, but are indicative and imply the idea, are avoided as far as possible to pre-empt accusations of misinterpretation.
4. The first version was released in some haste, and thus, many errors went unchecked. This is the second version of the paper.

¹⁸ *Mishkāt* 5398; *Bukhārī* 6434.

¹⁹ *ḥuthālah*: chaff; also means rubbish, refuse, garbage, vile, nasty.

²⁰ *Mirqāt al-Mafātīh*, vol.10/Pg.28.

²¹ In the preface of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, ḥadīth 6.

II. THE ISSUE

1. The Deobandis²² (and their elders) in their various books and *fatāwā* have said that falsehood is possible for Allāh t̄ālā – exalted is He from such attributes. They have used the term *imkān e kizb (imkān al-kadhib)*.²³
2. When *ūlama* of Ahlu’s Sunnah refuted them, they tried a justification: *it is not mustahīl dhātī* but *mustahīl āradī*, they said.
3. Some contemporary scholars²⁴ have also bought into this befuddling and claim that falsehood is an impossibility for Allāh t̄ālā but only contingently; and not intrinsically.²⁵ That is, they claim that it is *mustahīl āradī* and NOT *mustahīl dhātī*.
4. Is *kadhib* (falsehood) *mustahīl dhātī* or *mustahīl āradī*? What is the position of scholars until the 13th century?²⁶
5. The Deobandis claimed that *kadhib* is included in Divine Power; and argued that if it is not, it necessitates²⁷ that the creation has power the Creator does not have; and thus, the Creator’s power becomes lesser than that of creation.
6. When refuted, some Deobandis switched the argument and said that *kadhib* is a corollary of *khulf fi’l wayīd*; and since some Ashārīs differed that, it is permissible (*khulf fi’l wayīd*), the Deobandis stretched it to include *kadhib*. The Deobandi argument is:
 - a. *khulf fi’l wayīd* is differed upon by Ashārī mutakallimūn
 - b. *kadhib* is a corollary of *khulf fi’l wayīd*
 - c. Therefore, Ashārī scholars differed upon *imkān al-kadhib*.
7. The Deobandis cite certain passages from books of *kalām* (incomplete and out of context) and insist that this is conclusive proof that a difference exists and insist that these scholars:
 - a. either held the belief themselves (as they said it)
 - b. or did not refute this and therefore, accepted this as a valid position among Ahlu’s Sunnah
8. The Deobandis also say, “Falsehood is possible in *kalām lafẓī*, though it is impossible in *kalām nafsī*.”²⁸

²² Followers of the Deoband school; established in the 19th century and is situated in the state of Uttar Pradesh in North India.

²³ The word is **kadhib** in Arabic; *Tāj al-Ārūs* includes a few more variants including **kidhb** (and notes that it is not commonly used), **kidhāb** (like kitāb) and **kidh’dhāb** (like jinnān); in Urdu, it is commonly pronounced as **kizb**, but **kazib** is also acceptable. It is perhaps erroneously mentioned as **kizab** in *Fayruzu’l-Lughāt*; Platts does not consider this variant.

²⁴ Nuḥ Keller is well known in the English-speaking world as a scholar, translator and a Sufi shaykh; and who has made statements supporting this odious belief.

²⁵ *mustahīl dhātī* is translated as Intrinsically Impossible; *mustahīl āradī* is translated as Contingently Impossible.

²⁶ of the Islamic Calendar – coinciding with the 19th century of the Common Era. The 13th Century because, that is when Ismā’īl Dihlawi proposed these heretical ideas in his books. [In the previous version of this paper, I had written “the 12th Century” based on Ismā’īl Dihlawi’s year of birth; but appropriately, it should be in the 13th when he spread his heresies.]

²⁷ This is the claim of the Deobandis and those who followed them in their mendacity. It is cited here as their statement, which will be refuted in the following pages – Allāh t̄ālā willing.

²⁸ This is a red herring because, we now move from relatively straightforward argument to a much complex subject. Suffice it to say, that the science of *kalām* came into being, and indeed the eponym, because of the complex and complicated discussions concerning the *kalām* or Speech of Allāh t̄ālā.

III. THE SUNNI VIEW

1. *Kadhib* is falsehood, lying. That is, saying something, which is unlike or contrary to what has actually occurred.
2. *Kadhib*/falsehood is a flaw by the consensus of all sensible people.
3. It is impossible for the Creator – exalted is He – to have any flaw: whether in His Person (*dhāt*) or in His Divine Attributes (*ṣifāt*).
4. Therefore, it is *mustahīl* (or *muḥāl*) for *kadhib*/falsehood to exist in any divine attribute.
5. The *mustahīl* mentioned above is *mustahīl dhātī* and is not just *mustahīl áradī*.
6. That which is subject to Divine Power, are only *mumkināt* (contingent) and not *mustahīlāt* (impossible) nor *wājibāt* (necessary).
7. *Kadhib*/falsehood is classified as *muḥāl / mustahīl*; it is therefore not included in the Divine Power.
8. *Muḥāl/ mustahīl* mentioned in *kalām* books, is *mustahīl dhātī* and not *áradī* unless specified otherwise.
9. It is said clearly and unambiguously in Sunni books of *áqīdah* that *kadhib* is *muḥāl* for Allāh táālā.
10. By point 8 above, we know that anything termed as *muḥāl*, is *muḥāl dhātī*; thus, applying it to point 9, *kadhib* is *muḥāl dhātī* for Allāh táālā. Translated, it means that falsehood is intrinsically impossible for Allāh taālā.
11. Falsehood is an attribute of speech/*kalām*. It is not a separate entity in itself nor is it a discrete action.
12. *Kalām* or Divine Speech is a divine attribute and transcends all constraints and flaws that can occur in created speech.
13. *Kalām* or Divine Speech is pre-eternal.²⁹ Its associated attributes are also pre-eternal.
14. Falsehood/*kadhib* is dependent on the occurrence of a particular event or its non-occurrence. If the possibility of falsehood/*kadhib* exists in pre-eternal Divine Speech, then it would necessitate that:
 - a. Divine Speech would be dependent on an external factor and an accident (*ḥādith*) and would thus be subject to change (*taghyīr*)
 - b. Divine Speech (which is *qadīm*) being dependent on an external factor would render that external factor as pre-eternal (*azalī/qadīm*)
 - c. If not, Divine Speech would be *ḥādith*; and not pre-eternal.
15. The Deobandis try to deceive laymen by claiming that a valid difference of opinion exists and drag in the argument about *ḥusn-qubḥ* – the property of something being inherently praiseworthy or inherently ugly.

²⁹ *qadīm*

Mútazilis say that falsehood is impossible³⁰ because it is ugly. The Ahl as-Sunnah say, it is *muḥāl* not because it is ugly, but because it is a flaw. In the course of this discussion, certain statements are made by *úlamā* of *kalām*; Deobandis present these quotes, stripped of their context, as their evidence.

16. *Khulf fi'l waád* (reneging on the promise of reward) and *khulf al-wayíd* (waiving the threat of punishment) are two concepts debated upon by theologians. Everybody agrees that the first, *khulf al-waád* (reneging on promise of reward) is *mustaḥíl*.
17. Nevertheless, some Ashárís disagreed that *khulf al-wayíd* (waiving the threat of punishment) is also *mustaḥíl*. They said that it is *mustaḥíl áradī* and not *mustaḥíl dhātī* (not intrinsically impossible.)
18. The Deobandis say that *kadhib* is a corollary of *khulf fi'l wayid* and then equate the two. Their argument restated is:
 - a. Ashárís differed on the matter of *khulf fi'l wayíd*
 - b. Some Asharis said that it was *muḥāl áradī*, contingently impossible.
 - c. *Kadhib* is a corollary of *khulf fi'l wayíd*
 - d. Ergo, *kadhib* is *muḥāl áradī*, contingently impossible.
19. The Māturīdī contention is that *khulf* implies *kadhib*; but Ashárís responded to it and gave various answers to prove that it does not imply *kadhib*. This clearly shows that they don't believe in *kadhib*. Else, why would they refute this Māturīdī objection?³¹
20. It is incorrect to include *kadhib*/falsehood as a corollary of *khulf al-wayíd* (waiving the threat of punishment) as explained in various books of *áqīdah*.
21. Even if such a statement is found in a book of *kalām*, whether by error or by corruption of texts, it is still incumbent upon every Muslim to believe that falsehood is absolutely and intrinsically impossible (*mustaḥíl dhātī*); and that it is not included in Divine Power because it is a flaw; and that the Lord Almighty – exalted is He – is free from all flaws and faults.
22. It is not necessary to follow any scholar who makes this kind of mistakes and rather, it is obligatory to reject this heretical idea, irrespective of the standing of that scholar who proposes, attests or abets this view.

Imām Sanūsī in his *Muqaddimāt* says³² describing the basic reasons for infidel and heretical beliefs:

Taqīd ar-Radiyy or reprehensible following: to blindly follow someone, merely out of bias and prejudice; and not because of seeking the truth [or aiding it].

³⁰ Even the *later* Mutazilah agree that it is *muḥāl*; however, their reasoning to arrive at this conclusion is different. Moreover, the early Mútazilites believed that falsehood and oppression were included in Divine Power – and there was intense disagreement among their own factions. Eventually, some of their later scholars abandoned this concept, though they argued about it elsewhere and said that falsehood is *muḥāl* because it is ugly.

³¹ See the commentary of *Jawharah al-Tawḥīd* and a mention further in this paper.

³² *Al-Muqaddimāt*, Pg.47

Ismāyīl Dihlawi, the founder of Wahabism in India and an elder of the Deobandis was perhaps among the earliest, if not the first, to state this abominable belief.³³ Other Deobandi elders followed him in his heresy.

Many scholars in the subcontinent refuted this Neo-Mútazilīte, and among those who refuted them was Imām Aḥmed Rida Khan³⁴ al-Barelwi (1272-1340AH) who wrote extensively on this subject and three of which are well-known :

- i. *Sub'ḥān as-Subbūḥ án Kadhibi Áybun Maqbūḥ*³⁵
- ii. *Dāmān e Bāgh e Sub'ḥān as-Subbūḥ*³⁶
- iii. *Qam'a al-Mubīn Li Āmāl al-Mukadh'dhibīn*³⁷

This paper has benefitted immensely from the above works and particularly the first one. Those interested in an in-depth analysis of the issue and a comprehensive discussion, are recommended to read the book *Sub'ḥān as-Subbūḥ*.³⁸

³³ While this is similar to the Mútazilī heresy, Ismāyīl had a different take on this as evident from his pamphlet: *Ek-Rozi*.

³⁴ He is known as Alahazrat in the subcontinent. Alahazrat means 'one of august presence' or colloquially, 'The Grand Master.' This is similar to the titles 'His Highness' or 'His Majesty.' *Alahazrat* – the title – was used to address prominent people, including the Nawwabs and rulers until the 20th century. Today, by default, this title refers to no other than Imām Aḥmed Ridā Khān who rightfully deserves the title – as he is truly 'the Grand Master' of Islamic sciences. Allāh táālā be praised and He knows best.

³⁵ *Glorious is Subbūḥ from the ugliness and flaw of falsehood* (Subbūḥ: free from all flaws, His Divine Name)

³⁶ *The Courtyard of the garden of Sub'ḥān as-Subbūḥ*

³⁷ *An Articulate Reprimand: Dashing the hopes of the falsifiers*

³⁸ This was written in 1307 AH by Alahazrat Imām Aḥmed Ridā Khān Al-Barelwi answering the request for a fatwa in about 140 pages.

IV. A PRIMER ON KALĀM TERMINOLOGY

It is necessary to understand the terms used in *kalām* literature in order to understand the argument and the flaws in the counter-argument. Much of the confusion is due to the lack of clarity about the key terms in this discussion. Imām Sanūsī wrote many books on doctrine (*‘āqīdah*) and theology (*kalām*), three of which, are well known and many commentaries³⁹ are written on his books. In fact, Al-Sanūsī himself wrote commentaries on these books.⁴⁰ Al-Sanūsī, in the opening lines of *Umm al-Barāhīn*, says:



Know that these three definitions cover the rational argument:⁴¹

- a) *wujūb* [wājib]: necessary
- b) *istiḥālah* [mustaḥīl]: impossible
- c) *jāyiz* [mumkin]: contingent

wājib is that, whose non-existence is inconceivable;

mustaḥīl is that, whose existence is inconceivable;

jāyiz is that, whose existence and non-existence are both conceivable and possible.

Al-Sanūsī explains that ‘rule’ in this context means to attest to something or to negate it. And such a ‘rule’ is due to these reasons: revealed law (*sharī‘ah*), habit⁴² (*‘ādah*) and intellect (*‘aql*). Therefore, a ruling falls into one of these three classes: *sharā‘ī*, *‘ādī* or *‘aqlī*. It is necessary to know that the first two classes, namely *sharā‘ī* and *‘ādī* are not dealt with, in rational theology (*kalām*); in this science, we deal only with the rational argument, that is, *ḥukm al-‘aqlī*.⁴³

Al-Sanūsī’s explains: “the rational ruling falls in one of the three categories”⁴⁴ thus:

Everything that the intellect perceives, comprehends or imagines; about essences⁴⁵ of things or their attributes; the attributes that exist⁴⁶ or attributes that cannot exist;⁴⁷ or about something being pre-eternal⁴⁸ or an accident;⁴⁹ all of these will fall in one of the three categories.⁵⁰

³⁹ i) a short beginner’s text named *Umm al-Barāhīn*; also known as *Al-Sanūsīyah al-Ṣughrā*

ii) an intermediate text known as *Al-Sanūsīyah al-Wustā*

iii) an advanced text named *‘Āqīdatu Ahl al-Tawḥīd*; better known as *Al-Sanūsīyah al-Kubrā*

⁴⁰ Each of these has a commentary by Imām Sanūsī himself. Initially, he wrote a book (*Al-Kubrā*) on *‘āqīdah* which was a complex treatise and required simplification, so he wrote a simpler version (*Al-Wustā*); even this was not sufficient and he simplified it further (*Al-Ṣughrā*). His student, Al-Malālī writes, that upon the request of his father, the Imām simplified it further and named it *Ṣughrā al-Ṣughrā*.

⁴¹ The phrase used is *ḥukm al-‘aqlī*: literally, ‘the rational ruling’, which is further explained in the commentaries.

⁴² What is observed and is commonly known by habit.

⁴³ Summarized from Al-Sanūsī’s explanation of *Al-Ṣughrā*

⁴⁴ Three terms that describe three categories; the words ‘term’ ‘definition’ ‘category’ are used as is appropriate for the Arabic word *qisam*.

⁴⁵ *dhawāt*, plural of *dhāt* meaning essence; when used with Allāh tā‘ālā it is better translated as Person or Self.

⁴⁶ *ṣifāt wujūdiyyah* : attributes that exist and are attested

⁴⁷ *ṣifāt salabiyyah*: attributes that are absent and are negated

⁴⁸ *qadīm*: pre-eternal; opposite of *ḥādīth*.

⁴⁹ *ḥādīth*: that which is occurred, happened and it was non-existent prior to this occurrence.

⁵⁰ of *wājib*, *mustaḥīl* and *jāyiz/mumkin*

And in *Al-Wustā*, he says:⁵¹

(an understanding) of these three terms is essential for any discussion in the science of kalām.

Explaining the above, he writes in *Sharḥ al-Wustā*:⁵²

Undoubtedly, the idea⁵³ of these three concepts and the knowledge of the quiddity⁵⁴ of these terms, is the fundamental principle of the science of *kalām*. Because, when a scholar⁵⁵ discusses an issue, he will have to describe it in one of these three terms, to attest or negate or derive a corollary of the issue; and if that scholar does not know the true (definition) of these terms, he will not be able to understand what has been attested or negated (in this science). Imām al-Ḥaramayn considered that the comprehension of these three terms as fundamental intelligence, and one who does not understand these three is not counted among the sane and discerning.⁵⁶

Thus, the basic requirement for any discussion in *āqīdah* is a thorough understanding of these three terms. Imām Ibn Āshir says in *Murshid al-Muḃīn*:⁵⁷

**aqsāmu muqtaḃāhu bi'l ḥaṣri tumāz
wa hiya al-wujūb al-istiḥālah al-jawāz**⁵⁸

**fa wājibun lā yaqbalu'n nafiya bi ḥāl
wa mā abā al-thubūta āqlan al-muḥāl**

**wa jāyizan mā qabila'l amrayni sim
li'd ḏarari wa'n naḏarī kullun qusim**

the requirement of the (rational categorization) is covered under distinct categories which are (three): *wājib* (necessary), *istiḥālah* (impossible) and *jawāz*(contingent)

wājib is something that cannot be non-existent that which the intellect refuses that it can exist, is *muḥāl*

jāyiz is that which can be either way (possible to exist or not-exist) and each of these terms are classified as: imperative⁵⁹ and inferred⁶⁰

⁵¹ *Sharḥ al-Wustā*,Pg.78

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ *taṣawwuf* which in this context, is to have an idea, the notion or the concept in the mind.

⁵⁴ *ḥaqāyiq*, pl. of *ḥaqīqah* meaning reality of something or quiddity

⁵⁵ *mutakallim* - a scholar of kalām; 'scholar' can be used in English to mean either an erudite master or a student, which is befitting in this case.

⁵⁶ *āqīl*, sane, intelligent, discerning. in this context, he means one who can discern the arguments of kalām as he concludes in the following sentences.

⁵⁷ These are verses 7,8 and 9 from the versified book (317 verses) describing Islamic knowledge that is necessary for everyone *Murshid al-Muḃīn*; these verses cover topics on *āqīdah*, *fiqh* and *taṣawwuf*.

⁵⁸ an interesting sidenote is, the verse can be extended to the issue of *kadhib* and it means: that it is necessary [wujūb] to consider the impossibility [istiḥālah] of its being contingent [jawāz]. Sub'hānAllāh.

⁵⁹ *ḏarūri*: imperative; absolutely necessary or required; unavoidable.

⁶⁰ *naḏarī*: inferred; that is, to derive by reasoning; conclude or judge from premises or evidence.

As explained by Mayārah⁶¹ in *Al-Durr al-Thamīn*,⁶² these three terms are the basis of all discussions in rational theology; and any issue or a rule, has to be described in these three terms. And the classification of each of these terms is due to two reasons: imperative and inferred.

That is, a thing is classified as *wājib*, *mustahīl* or *jāyiz* due to an imperative reason (that which is obvious; for example, two is greater than one); or an inferred reason (that which is not established initially,⁶³ but upon examination and other evidence, it is inferred; for example, that it is *wājib* for Allāh tālā to be *qadīm*).

He further says that *wājib* mentioned by the author (Ibn Āāshir) is always *wājib dhātī* (intrinsically⁶⁴ necessary) and NOT *wājib āradī* (conditionally⁶⁵ necessary); that the author did not specify that *wājib* is *wājib dhātī* simply because, when it is said that it is *wājib*, it means nothing but *wājib dhātī* and will not be considered as *wājib āradī* except when explicitly mentioned as such.⁶⁶

Mayārah's conclusion then decimates the argument of the *kadh'dhābiyyah*.⁶⁷ He says⁶⁸ that similarly, *mustahīl* mentioned is *mustahīl dhātī* and not *mustahīl āradī*. He also gives an illustration to describe the difference to clear any confusion or misunderstanding of these terms by novices and unskilled scholars.

The conclusion of this [cautionary] note is: *wājib* mentioned is *wājib dhātī* and not *wājib āradī*; and *mustahīl* is *mustahīl dhātī* not *āradī*; and *jāyiz* is *jāyiz dhātī* [by nature, contingent].

If a certain thing is ordained *wājib* by the Lawgiver that it shall happen thus, it is *wājib āradī*; or if its being ordained impossible is made known by a report from *sharāyī* source that it shall not happen, it is *mustahīl āradī*;⁶⁹ however *jāyiz* does not mean permissible⁷⁰ or one is allowed to do a certain act.

We have seen earlier, that the focus in *kalām* literature is the rational argument; and that anything is described in three key terms. It is clear from the above that these definitions are considered absolutely, intrinsically and essentially necessary, impossible or contingent; unless it has been explicitly specified otherwise. So, the many texts that we shall quote hereafter mean *wājib dhātī* [essentially/intrinsically necessary] or *mustahīl dhātī* [essentially/intrinsically impossible] when mentioned without any specification.

⁶¹ Āllāmah Muḥammad ibn Aḥmed Al-Fāsī, famously known as Mayārah.

⁶² *Durr al-Thamīn* is a commentary of previously mentioned *Murshid al-Muḥyīn* of Ibn Āāshir.

⁶³ that is, one is initially unable to classify a thing as *wājib* or *mustahīl*; but upon examination, it can be eventually classified as one of the three.

⁶⁴ *dhātī* is translated as 'intrinsically.' I have preferred the word 'essentially' because it conveys both meanings of 'pertaining to the essence' and 'absolutely' for additional emphasis, and is thus closer to the literal translation.

⁶⁵ similarly *āradī* is translated varyingly as 'hypothetically' and 'contingently'; I prefer to use 'conditionally' because the previous two translated words cause confusion with the third term *jāyiz/mumkin*. However, for the purpose of this article, we will continue to use 'intrinsically' for *dhātī*, as used by Nuh Keller and other apologists; and hypothetically/contingently for *āradī*. Yet, in various places (particularly in translations), I will use what I consider a more accurate term. Allāh tālā knows best.

⁶⁶ Summarized from *Al-Durr al-Thamīn* Vol.1, Pg.16-18

⁶⁷ Alahazrat referred to those who believe and advocate, that falsehood is possible for Allāh tālā, as *kadh'dhābiyyah*: the Falsifiers, the Falsists.

⁶⁸ *Al-Durr al-Thamīn*, Vol.1, Pg.17

⁶⁹ That is, something which is not by nature *wājib* or *mustahīl* – but it has been ordained so for some reason [*āradī*] and this is conveyed by the *sharīāh*. This does not mean that anything that is conveyed by the *sharīāh* is automatically *wājib āradī* or *mustahīl āradī*.

⁷⁰ because *jāyiz* is a term used in jurisprudence to mean 'permissible' or 'allowed'.

Mayārah quotes Al-Sanūsī from his *Al-Ṣughrā* thus:⁷¹

Know, that for every sensible person who wishes to succeed in [gaining] knowledge about Allāh tāālā and His messengers – may Allāh tāālā bless them and give them peace – it is mandatory to gain an in-depth knowledge of these three categories, and to practice them well and understand them by iteration and illustration, such that one’s heart is at rest regarding their description; and such that one does not have to ponder upon their meaning or that one should not have any difficulty in recalling the [meaning and description of the] three categories when mentioned.

Ālī al-Qārī in *Ḍaw al-Māālī*:⁷²

Muḥāl : whose existence is impossible as deemed by the intellect; and it is said: *muḥāl* and *mustaḥīl* are essentially that which should NOT-EXIST.

Al-Bannānī in *Al-Mawāhib ar-Rabbāniyyah*⁷³ after describing the three classes of *sharāyī*, *āādī* and *āqlī* briefly, says about the rational argument which is comprised of three categories:⁷⁴

Know that each of these three categories are further categorized as conceptual [*taṣawwur*] and attestation [*taṣdīq*]; each of *taṣawwur* and *taṣdīq* is further categorized as imperative [*ḍarūrī*] and inferred [*naḥarī*]; each of these is further categorized in two other: *wājib dhātī*⁷⁵ and *wājib āradī*; and each of *wājib dhātī* and *wājib āradī* is further classified in two as affirmation [*ithbātī*] and negation [*nafyī*]; so these three main categories are sub-divided making a total of twenty-four categories.

He then lists illustrations for the sub-categories of *sharāyī*, *āqlī* and *āādī*. The examples for the eight sub-categories of rational categories are described by Al-Bannānī thus:

...the example of *taṣawwur* or conceptualization is, our understanding of ‘the world,’ that everything that exists in it except Allāh tāālā; the example of *taṣdīq* or attestation is, that the world is an accident and its Creator is Pre-Eternal; the example of *ḍarūrī* is, that one is half of two; or, that space is required for size; the example of *naḥarī* is, that one is the tenth part of a fourth of forty. The example of *wājib dhātī* is the Existence⁷⁶ of the Creator; the example of *wājib āradī* is the existence of the creation;⁷⁷ the example of *ithbāt* is the affirmation that everything except Allāh tāālā is created and came into being;⁷⁸ and that ten is an even number; the example of *nafyī* is the negation of seven being an even number; or negation of a partner unto Allāh tāālā.

⁷¹ Mayārah in *Al-Durr al-Thamīn* Vol1, Pg.17 quoting from Al-Sanūsī from his *Sharḥ al-Ṣughrā*

⁷² *Ḍaw al-Māālī*, Pg. 63 explaining under **wa lākin laysa yardā bi’l muḥālī**

⁷³ a marginalia on *Al-Muqaddimāt* by Al-Sanūsī.

⁷⁴ *wājib*, *mustaḥīl* and *mumkin*

⁷⁵ Al-Bannānī is using *wājib* as an illustration, because *dhātī* and *āradī* applies for all the three categories as we have seen in Mayārah’s explanation earlier and as Al-Bannānī himself explains further.

⁷⁶ *wujūd*

⁷⁷ See Mayārah’s commentary and Al-Sanūsī’s own commentary on his *Al-Muqaddimāt* for a simpler explanation.

⁷⁸ *ḥudūth*

In the commentary of *Umm al-Barāhīn*, Al-Dasūqī says describing the statement ‘*mustahīl* is that whose existence cannot be conceived’:

By *wujūd* (existence) he means, ‘affirmation.’⁷⁹ That is, it includes every thing impossible whether in essence⁸⁰ or attributes of existence or of the state of being⁸¹

Muḥammad al-Shahristānī in his *Nihāyat al-Iqdām fi ʿIlm al-Kalām* writes explaining these terms in a slightly different manner:⁸²

We say: the rational argument is covered in three definitions: *wājib*, *mustahīl* and *jāyiz*. *wājib* is that, which should necessarily exist; such that even hypothetically, its annihilation or non-existence is impossible; *mustahīl* is that, which should necessarily not-exist; such that, its existence is impossible, even hypothetically; *jāyiz* is that which is not necessary to either exist or not-exist.

Here he emphasizes that *mustahīl* is that which cannot exist even hypothetically. It is also necessary to note that the terms *mustahīl li dhatih* (intrinsically impossible) and *mustahīl li ghayrih* (extrinsically impossible) are also used outside kalām literature.

Al-Zuḥaylī⁸³ explains this in context of jurisprudence:⁸⁴

Mustahīl li dhatih: intrinsically impossible is that whose existence cannot be conceived by the intellect; like the concurrence of two opposites;⁸⁵ or the coincidence of two mutual contradictions;⁸⁶ or to exist in two spaces at the same time. for example: the permissibility and non-permissibility of the same thing on the same person at the same time.

Mustahīl li ghayrih: extrinsically impossible is that which is imaginable but it is not possible due to constraints;⁸⁷ for example, the flying of a human without flying machines, or his creation of bodies, or his carrying a huge mountain [on his back].

The definitions above are used in the context of *taklīf* – responsibility ordained by the Sacred Law is only for that which is *mumkin*; and that one is not liable or held responsible for that which is *mustahīl* – regardless of whether such a *mustahīl* is intrinsic or extrinsic.

⁷⁹ *thubūt*

⁸⁰ *dhāt*

⁸¹ *wujūd* or *ḥāl*

⁸² *Nihāyat al-Iqdām fi ʿIlm al-Kalām* Pg.15

⁸³ Dr. Wahbah Al-Zuḥaylī, a contemporary Syrian scholar and the author of *Fiqh al-Islāmī wa Adillatuh* and *Usul al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*.

⁸⁴ *Al-Wajīz fi Usūl al-Fiqh*, Al-Zuḥaylī, Pg.149.

⁸⁵ that is two opposite things existing in the same place: like day and night at the same time which is absurd.

⁸⁶ that is two contradictory things occurring at the same time in the same thing at the same place. like fire and water to exist in the same bowl at the same time.

⁸⁷ literal translation: it is not considered as possible by common observation or occurrence.

We end this section with a couple more quotes from Al-Sanūsī:⁸⁸

This *wājib* that is mentioned is *wājib dhātī* [intrinsically necessary]. As for *wājib áradī*, it is that which is related to the Divine Will of Allāh táālā – like the punishment of Abu Jahl. Because, when we look at the innate nature of this thing – it is *jāyiz*, possible; both the possibility⁸⁹ of punishment and its absence are rational.

However, when we look at the Divine Will of Allāh táālā to punish him, as has been informed to us by the truthful⁹⁰ and veritable Messenger– blessings of Allāh táālā upon him and peace – this becomes necessary [*wājib*] and it cannot be conceived that it⁹¹ will not come to be.⁹²

Verily, it is not necessary to consider something *wājib dhātī* only upon proviso, because by default and absolutely, *wājib* does not mean anything except *wājib dhātī*. And it cannot be considered *wājib áradī* except with an express qualification.

He further says after giving the definition of *mustahīl*:

Similarly, this *mustahīl* is also *mustahīl dhātī*;⁹³ as for *mustahīl áradī* it is separate from this because it is actually a form of *jāyiz*, like the impossibility of the faith of Abū Lahab, which is so, because of the extrinsic reason – that is the Divine Will⁹⁴ of Allāh táālā.

The summary of the discussion above is:

1. Impossible (*muḥāl/mustahīl*) is categorized as intrinsically or extrinsically (*dhātī/áradī*);
2. These two arabic terms can be translated as essentially and conditionally (*dhātī/áradī*);
3. Whenever, *mustahīl/muḥāl* (impossible) is mentioned, it is always *mustahīl dhātī/muḥāl dhātī*;
4. And NOT *mustahīl áradī/muḥāl áradī* unless explicitly specified.

Finally, Imām Sanūsī describing the reasons that cause heretical ideas says:

[One of the reason] is ignorance of the fundamental principles of rational rulings: that is the knowledge of what is necessary, what is contingent and what is impossible.

That is, if one does not understand these categories properly, they are well on their way to confuse them and hold a heretical idea or belief. Worse, lose their way and advocate such ideas to make a multitude go astray. We seek Allāh's refuge from such a malady.

⁸⁸ *Sharḥ al-Muqaddimāt*, p.77

⁸⁹ *wujuduh wa ádamuh*

⁹⁰ *ṣādiq, muṣaddaq* : The prophet ṣallAllāhu álayhi wa sallam. He is truthful and his being truthful is attested and evident.

⁹¹ punishment of Abu Jahl

⁹² *ádam*; thus a contingent thing becomes *wājib* due to the extrinsic reason of Divine Will. This is *wājib áradī*.

⁹³ that is unless an express qualification is mentioned, it is by default *mustahīl dhātī*. It is *mustahīl áradī* only with an explicit proviso.

⁹⁴ That is, by nature Abū Lahab is another human and his faith is possible. However, because of Divine Will that it shall not be, it becomes impossible. This is *mustahīl áradī*.

V. KALĀM TERMINOLOGY: A SUMMARY

Any student of kalām should know the primary definitions very well, described adequately in various introductory, intermediate and advanced texts. Those who do not understand or confuse these terms are ineligible to discuss these issues. I will try to summarize these concepts and their definitions as a quick reference for students like myself and as a handy guide to laymen.

Remember that there are three classes of rulings:

1. **Sharayī**: That which is ordained by scripture and revelation; this is also known as something ordained by *Dalīl Samyī*.
2. **Āādī**: That which is understood by habit and is considered as common knowledge. Like, fire burns and that fire is extinguished by water.
3. **Āqlī**: That which is known and proved by a rational argument.

Rulings in each of these classes fall in these three basic categories:

4. **Wājib**: That, which is necessary to exist; it is impossible for something *wājib* to NOT exist.
5. **Mustahīl**:⁹⁵ That which is impossible to exist; it is impossible for something *mustahīl* to exist.
6. **Mumkin**:⁹⁶ That which is contingent – can or cannot exist; it is not necessary for a contingent thing to exist and nor is it impossible for it to exist.

Each of these rulings can be established as being fundamentally necessary [**Ḍarūrī**] or arrived upon by reflection and analysis [**Naẓarī**].

The lexical meaning of *li-dhatihī* means, in itself, intrinsic, by nature, essentially and so forth; and the meaning of *li-ghayrihī* is:⁹⁷ because of an external dependency, extrinsic, because of external influence and so forth.

7. **Wājib Dhātī**: That which is *wājib* in itself; essentially necessary or intrinsically necessary.
8. **Wājib Li Ghayrih** or **Wājib Āradī**: That which is not *wājib* in itself, but because of an extrinsic reason it becomes *wājib*.
9. **Muḥāl Dhātī**: That which is *muḥāl* by itself; essentially impossible or intrinsically impossible; this is also known as being **Imtināā Bi'dh Dhāt**.
10. **Muḥāl Āradī** also **Mumtaniy bi'l Ghayr** or **Mustahīl Āradī**:⁹⁸ That which is not *muḥāl/mustahīl* in itself; but because of extrinsic reasons it becomes *mustahīl*; this is also known as being **Imtināā Bi'l Ghayr**.
11. **Mumkin Dhātī**: That which is contingent in itself; it is also known as **Imkān Bi'dh Dhāt**; and known as **Jāyiz**, and one way of saying it is **Jawāz**.

Unlike the two categories of *wājib* and *muḥāl*, *mumkin* does not change into the previous two categories and it is not right to say, **Mumkin bi'l Ghayr**. So anything that is *mumkin* is *mumkin dhātī*, and since this is a category of **Ḥukm Āqlī** – rational argument, this is *mumkin āqlī* or *jawāz āqlī*.

⁹⁵Also known *mumtaniy* or *muḥāl*.

⁹⁶Also known as *jāyiz*.

⁹⁷Also known as *āradī*

⁹⁸Notice the *mumtaniy* and *mustahīl* are used interchangeably and mean the same thing.

That is **Jawāz Āqlī** is just another way of saying any of the following:⁹⁹

- a. Imkān Dhātī
- b. Imkān
- c. Mumkin
- d. Jāyiz

The above is condensed from various books of Imām Sanūsī: *Muqaddimāt* and its commentary, *Ṣughrā, Wustā, Kubrā, Ṣughrā al-Ṣughrā* and his own commentaries on all of these; Imām Sanūsī's other work, *Sharḥ Al-Jazāyiriyah*; the commentaries of Ílaysh, Hud-Hudi, Dasūqī and Al-Bannani on Sanūsī's books; Mayārah's commentary on Ibn Āashir's book; *Al-Mawāqif* of Al-Ījī, its commentary by Sharīf Al-Jurjānī and a supercommentary by Siyālkūtī. Indeed, the older works of *kalām* (like books by Al-Baydāwī, Al-Shahrastānī, Al-Rāzī are indicative of this idea.) However, some latter *úlamā* did say that *imkān bi'l ghayr* or *mumkin áradī* is a possible category; upon examination, it is found that it is not a proper term.

In *Al-Mawāqif*, Al-Ījī discusses¹⁰⁰ the concept of *mumkin li dhātih* (contingent by nature.) It should be noted, that the *dhātih* (intrinsically) here is not vis-à-vis *mumkin li ghayrih*. In his marginalia of *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, Ḥasan Chalpi says:¹⁰¹

{I say, **imkān dhātī (contingent intrinsically)...**}¹⁰² here, the specification of 'intrinsic' for *imkān dhātī* (intrinsically contingent) is to caution against *imkān istiýdādī*;¹⁰³ not against *imkān bi'l ghayr*.¹⁰⁴

Al-Jurjānī explains the concept in his commentary thus:¹⁰⁵

...so *imkān dhātī* is not supposed here at all, simply because there is no *mumkin bi'l ghayr*, extrapolating [on the categories of] *wājib bi'l ghayr*¹⁰⁶ or *imtināá bi'l ghayr*.¹⁰⁷

The secret here is: that *wājib bi'l ghayr* and *imtināá bi'l ghayr* are effected upon a *mumkin*¹⁰⁸ and that which is not *mustahīl*. Because it is the *mumkin* that can exist or not exist; and is equally poised concerning the essence of that thing [the contingent thing] to exist or not exist.

⁹⁹ See *Sharḥ al-Muqaddimāt* of Al-Sanūsī, Pg.79: "In the terminology of *kalām* scholars, *jāyiz áqlī* and *mumkin áqlī* are synonyms and refer to the same thing." However, in the parlance of logicians/philosophers there are two categories: **jāyiz áam** – general contingency and **jāyiz khāṣ** – specific contingency. We do not consider this category following Imām Sanūsī's lead.

¹⁰⁰ *Al-Mawāqif*, Pg.71

¹⁰¹ *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, Vol.3, Pg.179

¹⁰² This is the text of *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*.

¹⁰³ *imkān istiýdādī* is also known as *imkān al-wuqūyī*. Note that a thing can be contingent intrinsically does not necessarily mean that it will come into existence; however, it can be transformed to *wājib bi'l ghayr* or *mumtaniý bi'l ghayr* due to an external reason. Contingent existentially means: that if its existence is supposed, it cannot be transformed into either *wājib* or *mustahīl*; whether *dhātī* or *áradī* in either cases of existence and non-existence.

¹⁰⁴ That is there is no thing as *imkān bi'l ghayr*.

¹⁰⁵ *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, Vol.3, Pg.180 ; The Third Rank; The Fourth Objective: Discussion about *mumkin li dhātih*.

¹⁰⁶ *wājib áradī*

¹⁰⁷ *muḥāl áradī* or *mumtaniý bi'l ghayr*

¹⁰⁸ that is: only a *mumkin* can be transformed into *mustahīl áradī/imtināá bi'l ghayr* or *wājib áradī/wājib bi'l ghayr* because of extraneous reasons. and this because only *mumkin* can either exist or not-exist; when an extraneous constraint is applied, it simply becomes impossible to exist or necessary to exist.

Siyālkūtī¹⁰⁹ in his marginalia on Al-Jurjānī's commentary writes:

that is if it was intrinsically contingent [*imkān dhātī*], this extraneous clause would then have an influence on the contingent nature of that thing. And what follows is invalid because, we do not have conditional contingent¹¹⁰ [*mumkin li ghayrih*] in describing 'contingent' as it is in the case of necessary and impossible [*wājib, imtināá*] which are caused due to an external condition or dependency or its absence.¹¹¹

12. Kalām Nafsī: The Divine Attribute of Allāh táālā, Divine Speech; this is pre-eternal, self-subsistent, unchangeable and *wājib*; all properties that are valid for attributes of Allāh táālā are applicable here and conversely, all properties that are impermissible to be admitted for the Attributes of Allāh táālā are impossible.

13. Kalām Lafẓī: The letters and words that convey Divine Speech; or the letters and words that are indicative, denotative of the Divine Speech of Allāh táālā. Words and letters are accidents, but the meaning they convey is pre-eternal and self-subsisting.¹¹²

It should be noted that the above sub-categorization of *nafsī* and *lafẓī* is merely superficial. This was mentioned by scholars, in the context of Mutazili objections as explained by *úlamā*, and indeed, in *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif* itself, that there is no real difference:

Therefore, the *kalām nafsī* according to him [Al-Ashārī] includes both words and their meanings and are Pre-eternal.¹¹³

This categorization was used, also to refute the anthropomorphist heresies, some who went as far as to claim that the letters, words, sounds, ink, paper and binding [of the book] are all pre-eternal!¹¹⁴ One scholar answering this quipped, 'Then, what stopped him from saying that the hands that made those covers are also pre-eternal?' Most Ashārī imams wrote a separate section in their books clarifying that there is no difference in both and that 'the Speech of Allāh táālā is one.'

How can words that are indicative of Divine Speech be false, without entailing the same in Divine Speech? It is like saying the words can be false but the meaning is true. *Al-íyādhū billāh!*

14. Ḥusn: Praiseworthy, or something inherently beautiful.

15. Qubḥ: Deplorable, or something inherently ugly.

The Mútaẓilah say that things are inherently beautiful or ugly. And that Allāh táālā does not do ugly things. The Ashārī argument here is that the Will of the Lord is what ordains something beautiful or ugly. If He says that something is ugly, it is ugly. For example, fasting in Ramadan is praiseworthy and beautiful; but fasting on the first of Shawwāl (Eid day) is ugly. Telling lies is ugly in general; however, if someone is pursuing a Prophet seeking to kill him, it is not ugly to tell a lie to save the Prophet. The point Ashārīs make, is that anything is beautiful or ugly, as declared by the Shariāh¹¹⁵ not by the inherent nature of that thing.¹¹⁶

¹⁰⁹ Marginalia of Abdu'l Ḥakīm Siyālkūtī on *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, Vol.3/Pg.180

¹¹⁰ which is absurd because contingent itself means that its existence is dependent, and is neither necessary nor impossible.

¹¹¹ that is *wājib li ghayrih* or *mumtaniy li ghayrih* are caused due to an external factor.

¹¹² *qiyāmuḥu bi nafsih*.

¹¹³ *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, Vol.8, Pg.117 [Marṣad ar-Rābiy:Maṣṣad al-Sābiy]

¹¹⁴ *qadīm*

¹¹⁵ that is the commandments or ordaining of the Lord Almighty Allāh.

¹¹⁶ The difference between Mútaẓilī, Māturīdī and Ashārī scholars on this topic is beyond the scope of this paper.

Furthermore, the Mútazilah say that falsehood in the speech of Allāh táālā is *muḥāl* because it is ugly. Sunnis object to it and say, that it is *muḥāl* not because it is ugly, but rather because it is a flaw. Either one tells a lie out of natural vileness, or fear, or greed, or other reasons, which are all flaws; and the Creator is free from them. Notice, that both agree it is *muḥāl*, but the difference is the route by which they arrive at the conclusion.

Sunnis object to, and show the problem with the Mutazili position and say, if falsehood ceases to remain ugly, as in the case of saving a Prophet, then falsehood becomes possible. And our original standpoint – the foregone conclusion – that falsehood is *muḥāl* for Allāh táālā becomes invalid. Therefore, it is necessary to rule that falsehood is a flaw and therefore *muḥāl* for Allāh táālā.

16. **Naqs**: Flaw, imperfection, defect, deficiency.
17. **Kamāl**: Perfection; opposite of flaw and imperfection.
18. **Maqdūr**: That which is included in or subject to Divine Power.¹¹⁷
19. **Khulf fi'l Waád**: Reneging on the promise of reward.
20. **Khulf fi'l Wayíd**: Foregoing the threat of punishment.
21. **Irādah**: Divine Will, it is that attribute which specifies [or chooses] some of the contingent to bring it into existence or make it non-existent.
22. **Qudrah**: Divine Power: It is that Divine Attribute, which can bring into existence anything contingent, or annihilate it according to Divine Will.
23. **Ĥādith**: That which came into existence and is not pre-eternal; everything, except the Person and Attributes of Allāh táālā are *ĥādith*.
24. **Qadīm, Azalī**: that which is pre-eternal and has existed without a beginning. Only Allāh táālā and His Attributes are *qadīm*; everything else is *ĥādith*.
25. **Ádam**: Non-existence.
26. **Mádūm**: That which is non-existent. This does not mean that it is impossible to exist. It just means that hitherto, it is non-existent.
27. **Wujūd**: Existence.
28. **Mawjūd**: That which is existent.

¹¹⁷InshāAllāh, this will be elaborated in the next section, that only the *mumkin* is included in the *maqdūr*; and neither *wājib* nor *muḥāl* are included in *maqdūr*.

VI. IS MUĤĀL INCLUDED IN DIVINE POWER?

Even a beginner in this science knows that *muĥāl* (or *mustaĥīl*.) by definition, is not included in Divine Power. Just as *wājib* is not included or governed by Divine Power.

The preclusion of *mustaĥīl* from Divine Power does not cause a deficiency in Power, but rather, the very thing that was not included in Divine Power is flawed, and because of its defect, it is not included in Divine Power. Keep in mind from the previous discussion that *muĥāl* is *muĥāl dhātī* unless explicitly mentioned otherwise.

The following citations emphatically prove that none has disagreed on the principle that, Divine Power¹¹⁸ includes everything that is contingent (*mumkin*); it does not include nor govern the impossible (*mustaĥīl/muĥāl*) or the necessary (*wājib*).

1. In *Jawharah al-Tawĥīd* verse 33:

**fa qudratun bi mumkinin tállaqat
bilā tanāhī mā bihī tállaqat**

Divine Power governs only the contingent
Without any limits to that which it governs (that is *mumkināt* or the contingent)

2. Al-Bājūrī in *Tuĥfatu'l Murīd*¹¹⁹ explains the above verse:

As if he is saying: It (Divine Power) is not concerned (with anything) except the contingent (*mumkin*). That is, every possible thing (or everything that is contingent.) Even though the noun¹²⁰ is indefinite, within the context of attestation (such indefinite nouns are) used as a term of generalization. As it is said in Qur'ān: **'the soul shall know what it has sent forth'**¹²¹ [actually] means 'every soul'. So, Power, is concerned with all contingent things; because, if any contingent thing were beyond this Power, then it would necessitate powerlessness,¹²² which is *muĥāl* for Allāh táālā.

3. He further says:

The following are excluded from *mumkin*: *wājib* (necessary) and *mustaĥīl* (impossible) as Divine Power is not concerned with these two kinds. Because, if it concerns the existence of *wājib*, it necessitates bringing into existence that already exists; and if it concerns with its¹²³ annihilation, then it overturns the very nature of *wājib*; because by definition and by its very essence, *wājib* means that which cannot be non-existent.¹²⁴ And if Divine Power concerns the *mustaĥīl*, it would be opposite to the case of *wājib*.¹²⁵

¹¹⁸ *qudrah*

¹¹⁹ *Tuĥfatu'l Murīd* Pg.116, published by Al-Maktabah al-Az'hariyyah li't Turāth

¹²⁰ *mumkin* is indefinite in the verse, but actually means all *mumkināt*

¹²¹ **álimat nafsun mā aĥġarat**, Sūrah Al-Takwīr, Verse 14

¹²² *ájz*

¹²³ the *wājib*

¹²⁴ *ádam*

¹²⁵ That is, if *mustaĥīl* were to be in existence, this would overturn the nature of *mustaĥīl*; because by definition and by its nature, it is that which cannot exist; and if *mustaĥīl* were to be annihilated, it is already the case.

4. Al-Sanūsī says in *Al-Muqaddimāt*:

Eternal and Divine Power:¹²⁶ is the description of the Attribute by which every contingent thing is brought into existence or annihilated (or not brought into existence) according to Divine Will.

5. Al-Bannānī explaining this, says:¹²⁷

And he cautiously says *mumkin*, so that it is understood that *wājib dhātī* and *mustaḥīl dhātī* are not included [in Divine Power] because Divine Power in its perfection, and Divine Will, are not concerned with these two...

6. In *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*:¹²⁸

Nothing, which is muḥāl, is included in Divine Power

7. Imām Yāfiyī says:¹²⁹

No rational impossibilities¹³⁰ are subject to Divine Power

8. In *Sharḥ Fiqh al-Akbar*:¹³¹

The furthest in the matter is that such a thing is by itself impossible¹³² like the coinciding of opposites, or the overturning of the realities or the annihilation of the pre-eternal; none of these things are included in Divine Power that is Pre-eternal.

9. In *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*:¹³³

The Knowledge of Allāh tāālā, in general, encompasses everything that is comprehensible: whether contingent, necessary or impossible; this is even more generic (and all-inclusive) than Divine Power because, Power governs only the *mumkin* (contingent); not the *wājib* (necessary) and the impossible (*mumtaniy*).

10. In *Al-Musāmarah*:¹³⁴

Thirdly, that which concerns Divine Knowledge is much more general in scope than that which is governed by Divine Power. Because, Divine Knowledge is inclusive of [everything:] *wājib*, *mumkin* and *mumtaniy*; whereas, Divine Power is concerned only with the *mumkin* and not the *wājib* or *mumtaniy*.

¹²⁶ *qudrah al-azaliyyah*

¹²⁷ *Al-Mawāhib ar-Rabbāniyyah fi Sharḥi'l Muqaddimāt al-Sanūsīyah*

¹²⁸ *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*, Divine Power: The Second Discussion Vol.2, Pg.353 onwards

¹²⁹ Cf. *Sub'hān as-Subbūh*, Imām Aḥmed Riḍā al-Baraylawī.

¹³⁰ *mustaḥīlāt al-āqaliyyah*

¹³¹ *Mināḥ al-Rawḍ al-Az'ḥar Sharḥ Fiqh al-Akbar*, Ālī al-Qārī. Pg.56

¹³² that is, it is a basic premise itself without requiring additional proof

¹³³ *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, Al-Marṣad al-Rābiy, Al-Maqṣad al-Thāliṭh. Vol.8, Pg.70

¹³⁴ *Al Musāmarah Sharḥ al-Musāyarah*, The Second Pillar: Knowledge of the Attributes of Allāh tāālā. Pg.85

11. In *Sharḥ al-Āqāyid*,¹³⁵ *Usūl al-Dīn*¹³⁶ and in *Al-Inṣāf*:¹³⁷

He has [absolute] Power over all things that can be governed¹³⁸ by Divine Power.

12. The statement: **qādirun álā jamiy al-maḥdūrāt**¹³⁹ is explained by the Ashārī Imām Abu'l Muḥaffar al-Isfarāyīnī¹⁴⁰ in *Al-Tabṣīr*:¹⁴¹

Just as it is permissible to say that He is the Knower of all things, it is permissible to say that Allāh tāālā has Power over all things that can be governed¹⁴² by Divine Power. It is impossible to say that He has Power over everything absolutely. Because the Pre-eternal¹⁴³ is a thing and it is impossible (*muṣṭahīl*) for Divine Power to be concerned with it [or govern it].

That which is in the Qur'ān that [is apparently all-inclusive]: '**He has Power over all things**', is an expression that has a specification.¹⁴⁴ It actually means, 'He has Power over all things that are governed by His Power.' It is therefore, that the people of knowledge have said that the verse of knowledge¹⁴⁵ [is general] and has no exception and there is no specification; but the verse of power¹⁴⁶ has a specification.

When it is said that 'Knowledge and Power [are general] and have no specification' it is actually meant that: Knowledge is general [without any specification, *takhṣīṣ*] and encompasses everything that can be known. Moreover, Power is general [and all-inclusive] in all things that are governed¹⁴⁷ by Divine Power.

13. Finally, Mayārah in *Durr al-Thamīn* citing *Sharḥ al-Ṣuḥrā* of Al-Sanusi:¹⁴⁸

That which is governed by Divine Power and Divine Will is just one [category]: that is, the *mumkin*, the contingent – and not the *wājib*, nor the *muṣṭahīl*.

¹³⁵ *Sharḥ al-Āqāyid*, Al-Taftāzāni. Pg.58: His Eternal Attributes.

¹³⁶ *Usūl al-Dīn*, Abdu'l Qāhir al-Baghdādī. Pg.115

¹³⁷ *Al-Inṣāf*, Al-Baqillānī, pg.51

¹³⁸ maḥdūrāt.

¹³⁹ He has [absolute] Power over all things that can be governed by Divine Power.

¹⁴⁰ Abu'l Muḥaffar al-Isfarāyīnī, d.471AH

¹⁴¹ *Al-Tabṣīr fi'd Dīn* Pg.142

¹⁴² maḥdūrāt

¹⁴³ qadīm

¹⁴⁴ takhṣīṣ

¹⁴⁵ And Allāh has the Knowledge of all things. Qur'ān, Al-Aḥzāb v.40

¹⁴⁶ And Allāh has Power over all things. Qur'ān, Al-Māyidah, v.17

¹⁴⁷ jamiy al-maḥdūrāt

¹⁴⁸ *Durr al-Thamīn*, Vol.1, Pg.24

Further, he says:

The people of truth say that *mumkin* is governed in three ranks. That which is related to Divine Power; that which is related to Divine Will and that related to Knowledge concerning the *mumkin*. The first is because of the second, and the second because of the third.¹⁴⁹

Divine Power and Divine Will do not concern *wājib* and *mustahîl* because, Power and Will are two influencing Attributes. Therefore, that which necessitates influence to bring something into existence after non-existence, then it is necessary for it [such influencing attribute] to not be non-existent in the first place, like *wājib*. Thus, *qudrah* and *irādah* do not have influence on *wājib*. Else, it would be attempting to bring into existence that which is already present.¹⁵⁰

And that, whose existence cannot be accepted at all - the *mustahîl* - does not accept the influence of the two attributes [of *qudrah* and *irādah*] as well. Otherwise, the reality [of definitions] becomes topsy-turvy and that which is [classified] as *mustahîl* becomes contingent [*jāyiz*] itself!

Therefore, it is not a shortcoming of the two eternal attributes of *qudrah* and *irādah*, if they do not concern *wājib* and *mustahîl*; rather, if they are concerned with them,¹⁵¹ then it necessitates a shortcoming in these two Divine Pre-eternal attributes. Then, according to this corrupt logic¹⁵² it becomes possible to annihilate the very two attributes¹⁵³ themselves; rather, to annihilate the Self of Allāh táālā, Himself! And [possible] to attest an accident to godhood, which is not the attribute of God ¹⁵⁴ (of *ilāh*); and to accept that, necessary attributes can be made void.

Exalted and glorified is Our Lord from such things.

Where is any flaw or mischief greater than this? In summary, this corrupt idea leads to a grave confusion; and then, nothing remains from faith [*iman*] alongside [this idea] or anything rational remains.

Therefore, the key point to remember is that only *mumkin* is included in Divine Power; neither *muḥāl* nor *wājib* are included in, or subject to, or governed by Divine Power.

¹⁴⁹ That is, His Power governs according to His Will which is according to His Knowledge

¹⁵⁰ That is, *wājib* is pre-eternal and has always existed. Then what is the point of Power and Will to effect upon it as *wājib* doesn't accept any influence.

¹⁵¹ *wājib* and *mustahîl*

¹⁵² *at-taqdir al-fasid*

¹⁵³ *qudrah* and *irādah*

¹⁵⁴ *ilāh*

VII. ALLĀH MOST HIGH IS TRANSCENDENT FROM ALL FLAWS

One of the fundamental principles of Islamic doctrine is that Allāh tāālā is free from all defects and flaws. It is a postulate from which further rational rulings in *ʿaqīdah* are derived and understood. This is the basic belief, which even a child can understand. Almost every *ʿaqīdah* book describes this and it is an automatic assumption. It is incredible to believe that a person who claims to be a scholar and from the Sunni creed can doubt this postulate. Even disbelievers negate imperfection to their own false gods; even though they try to prove certain things as perfection, which we Muslims believe are imperfections. Therefore, the argument is not whether the Creator is free from flaw; everyone agrees that He is; the argument is about what constitutes an imperfection. Yet, one person – defending the Deobandi position – in an argument said, ‘Where does it say that the Creator cannot have a flaw?’ We seek Allāh’s refuge from this kind of heretical audacity that prompted Imām Aḥmed Riḍā to say:¹⁵⁵

**jahāN mein koyi bhi kāfir ke kāfir aysā ho
jo apney rabb pey safāhat¹⁵⁶ ka dāgh le ke chaley**

Is there anyone, even the worst infidel?

Who proudly walks around claiming the blemish of vileness upon his lord?

Statements from *ūlamā* that say Allāh tāālā is free from all flaws:

1. In *Al-Mawāqif* of Al-Ījī:

The Attributes of Allāh tāālā are all attributes of perfection and they are free from [every] flaw.

2. In its commentary, Al-Jurjānī writes:¹⁵⁷

It is *muḥāl* for Him to have any flaw and this is a unanimously agreed-upon [fact].

3. The first line of *Al-Jazāyiriyyah*:¹⁵⁸

subḥānahu jalla án shibhin wa án mathali

Sanctified is He and Exalted is He from similitude and examples.

4. Imām Sanūsī in the commentary of *Al-Jazāyiriyyah*:¹⁵⁹

As if answering the question for the proof of sanctification of Allāh tāālā and that He is transcendent from all flaws. As if, he [the author] is saying: He is transcendent from all flaws; because, He is exalted from having any similitude or example. One way to prove this, is that if He is attributed with a flaw – exalted is He from such things – then He would be dependent on something that would make Him [or His Attributes] perfect; as that flaw would negate perfection; this would necessitate, that He is powerless and dependent – and this is the character of the *ḥawādith*;¹⁶⁰ that would make Him similar to accidents. How can this be, when you have demonstrated His being free from similitude?

¹⁵⁵ *Ḥadāyiq e Bakhshish*, Imam Ahmed Riḍā al-Baraylawī

¹⁵⁶ Because in *Juḥd al-Muqill*, a Deobandi author tries to prove that vileness is in Divine Power.

¹⁵⁷ Sharḥ al-Mawāqif Vol.8, Pg.38

¹⁵⁸ *Kifāyatul Murīd*, Imām Aḥmed Al-Zawwāwī, d.884 AH

¹⁵⁹ *Al-Manhaj al-Sadīd*, Al-Sanūsī p.29

¹⁶⁰ Accidents. Plural of *ḥadīth*.

5. Al-Sanūsī in the explanation of Divine Names:¹⁶¹

Al-Quddūs: That He is transcendent from all flaws.

6. Qādī iyād in *Al- Iylām*:¹⁶²

Flaws and defects cannot approach His Attributes.

7. Ibn Humām in *Al-Musāyarah*:¹⁶³

Every semblance of flaw, like ignorance and falsehood, are *mustahīl* for Allāh tāālā.

8. Ibn Abi'sh Sharīf in its commentary *Al-Musāmarah*:¹⁶⁴

It is {essentially impossible}¹⁶⁵ for Him (Allāh *subhānahu wa tāālā*) {all attributes of flaw like ignorance and falsehood}; rather, it is also absolutely impossible for Him {to have} any attribute that has neither perfection nor flaw, because, every attribute of the Lord Almighty Allāh is that of perfection.

9. Ibn Abi'sh Sharīf in the same book:¹⁶⁶

We say: There is no difference of opinion among Ashārīs or others that, anything that is considered as a flaw for creation, then the Creator is also Transcendent from that. He is free from it and it is essentially impossible [*muḥāl*] for Allah tāālā. Falsehood is an attribute of flaw/fault for creation. [Hence it is *muḥāl* for Allāh tāālā]

10. Qādī al-Bāqillānī in *Al-Inṣāf*:¹⁶⁷

Belief in Allāh tāālā comprises of [belief in] Oneness of Allāh, Sanctified is He; and to attest His Divine Attributes and negation of flaws from His Attributes; as flaws necessitate anyone having them to be accidents.¹⁶⁸

11. Imām al-Ĥaramayn explaining Divine Names:¹⁶⁹

Al-Quddūs: .. it means that He is Transcendent from any attribute of flaw, and anything that leads to [the conclusion that it is] an accident¹⁷⁰

12. Al-Tūnisī in *Al-Nukat al-Mufīdah*:¹⁷¹

The verdict [derived from] intellect and evidence from revelation is, that it is necessary to attribute Allāh tāālā with Attributes of Perfection; and these two proofs mandate the impossibility [*istihālah*] of flaw or anything that is not befitting His Majesty.

¹⁶¹ *Al-Asnā fi Sharḥi Asmā' al-Allāh al-Ĥusnā*

¹⁶² *Al-Iylām bi Āudūd al-Islām* Pg.37

¹⁶³ *Al-Musāyarah with Al-Musāmarah*, Pg.326

¹⁶⁴ *Al-Musāmarah with Musāyarah* as inline text, Pg.326 : The Description of the Ahlu's Sunnah Doctrine.

¹⁶⁵ *mustahīl*, that is *mustahīl dhāti*

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid*, Pg.178

¹⁶⁷ *Al-Inṣāf*, Pg.34

¹⁶⁸ That is, Allāh tāālā and His Attributes are all pre-eternal; if there were a flaw in any attribute, it would be an accident – which is *muḥāl*.

¹⁶⁹ *Al-Irshād*, Al-Juwaynī. Pg.145

¹⁷⁰ *ḥādith*; that is anything that is opposed to His Attribute of being Pre-Eternal, *qadīm*.

¹⁷¹ *An-Nukat al-Mufīdah Sharḥ Khutbatu'l-Āqīdah of Al-Qayrawānī*, Al-Tūnisī Pg.90

13. Imam Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī in his *Al-Iylām* says: ¹⁷²

Whosoever attests or denies something that explicitly attributes a flaw to Allāh tāālā is a *kāfir*.

14. In *Badyi'l Amālī*:¹⁷³

**ilāh al-khalqi mawlāna qadīmun
wa mawṣūfun bi awṣāfi'l kamāli**

Our Lord, the Creator, is Eternal
and His Attributes are attributes of Perfection.

15. Ālī al-Qārī writes:¹⁷⁴

All of Allāh's attributes *Exalted is He* are that of Perfection and He is transcendent from every sign or indication of flaw or decline or decay.

16. Imām al-Ḥaramayn in *Lumá al-Adillah*:

The Lord *Sanctified and Exalted is He* is transcendent from every semblance of flaw¹⁷⁵

Anything that suggests an accident or an indication of flaw, then the Lord Almighty is transcendent from such thing.¹⁷⁶

17. In *Jawharah* it is said:¹⁷⁷

**qiyāmuḥu bi'n nafsi waḥdāniyyah
munazzahan awṣafuḥu saniyyah**

His Existence is by Himself, and He is Alone
His Lightsome Attributes are Transcendent

18. Al-Ṣāwī¹⁷⁸ commenting on this:¹⁷⁹

Or '**sanā**' with elongation, meaning exaltedness. Because, His Attributes are Exalted and are transcendent and free from all flaws. Thus, His Attributes *Sanctified is He and Exalted* are Lofty, Beautiful and Majestic.

19. Al-Jurjānī in *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*:¹⁸⁰

Anything among the attributes, whose non-existence is praiseworthy and existence is a flaw,¹⁸¹ then it is necessary to believe that Allāh tāālā is free and transcendent from such an attribute.

¹⁷² *Al-Iylām li Qawaṭi'y al-Islam*, Pg.

¹⁷³ *Badyi'l Amālī*, Verse 2

¹⁷⁴ *Ḍaw al-Māālī*, Pg.59

¹⁷⁵ *Lumá al-Adillah*, Imām Juwaynī. Pg.97

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid*, Pg.107

¹⁷⁷ *Jawharah al-Tawḥīd*, Verse 25

¹⁷⁸ Aḥmed ibn Muḥammad al-Ṣāwī al-Khalwatī, (1175-1241 AH)

¹⁷⁹ *Sharḥ Jawharah Al-Ṣāwī*, Pg.161

¹⁸⁰ *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, Vol.8, Pg.156

¹⁸¹ Falsehood is one such thing. Its non-existence is praiseworthy and its existence a flaw, ergo it is wājib to consider Him transcendent from such attribute. I say: Did Sharīf al-Jurjānī forget this in the space of a few pages? (See Appendix C for discussion on a problematic quote)

20. Imām Rāzī in *Lawāmiy al-Bayyināt* explaining the Divine Name **Al-Quddūs**:¹⁸²

The meaning of this name is, that Allāh táālā is free from and transcendent from all flaws and defects.

21. Imām Sanūsī in *Sharḥ al-Kubrā*:¹⁸³

He *Exalted and Glorified is He* is free from every flaw; [known by] rational [proof] and by revelation.

22. Al-Isfarāyīnī in *Al-Tabṣīr*:¹⁸⁴

Know that it is not possible to attribute Allāh *Sanctified is He* with any flaw, or a pitfall. Because, a pitfall is a kind of an obstacle, and an obstacle would necessitate someone creating or causing that obstacle – and there is no one above Allāh táālā to prevent Him [from doing what He Wills.] He has cautioned about this when He says: 'And He is Allāh, there is no God except He, The Malik¹⁸⁵, The Quddūs¹⁸⁶, The Salām¹⁸⁷, The Mu'min¹⁸⁸, The Muhaymin¹⁸⁹, The Áziz¹⁹⁰, The Jabbār¹⁹¹, The Mutakabbir.¹⁹² Glorified and Sanctified is He from the partners they ascribe to Him.'¹⁹³

As-Salām is one who is Immune from flaws, defects and pitfalls. *Al-Quddūs* is one who is transcendent from all flaws and obstacles; He has described Himself as: 'The Lord of the Throne, The Majīd':¹⁹⁴ Majd, in the parlance of Arabs means immense glory, such that if anything has a flaw or something that prevents perfection, then such an entity cannot be called *Majīd*. When He has attributed Himself as *Majīd*, Sanctified is He, we know that no flaw or defect can approach Him [or His Attributes].

23. Al-Bayḏāwī in *Ṭawāliyy al-Anwār*:¹⁹⁵

The second reason: Verily everything that can be attributed to Allāh táālā is an attribute of perfection (by agreement). If [such an attribute] is bereft [of perfection] then it would be a flaw – and it is *muḥāl* [for Allāh táālā to have a flaw in His Attributes].

¹⁸² *Lawāmiy al-Bayyināt Sharḥ Asmā'a Allāhi wa's Ṣifāt*, Pg.194

¹⁸³ *Sharḥ al-Kubrā* w. Marginalia of ḥāmidī, Pg.194

¹⁸⁴ *Al-Tabṣīr*, Pg.137-138

¹⁸⁵ The King

¹⁸⁶ The Absolutely Transcendent

¹⁸⁷ Immune from defects

¹⁸⁸ One who attests to the veracity of His Prophets and Messengers

¹⁸⁹ One whose dominion encompasses everything, by His Knowledge, Will and Power

¹⁹⁰ He who has Power upon all contingent things – and to do or forsake anything He Wishes

¹⁹¹ One who can impose on His creation what He likes, whether they like it or not.

¹⁹² One whose Greatness of Self, Attributes and Actions are made known by intellect and revelation. These meanings are summarized from *Al-Asnā of Al-Sanūsī*, Pg.28-30.

¹⁹³ Sūrah Al-Ḥashr, Verse 23

¹⁹⁴ Sūrah Al-Burūj, Verse 51

¹⁹⁵ *Ṭawāliyy al-Anwār*, Pg.171

The unsuspecting reader may wonder why these quotes are being translated. One may ask: 'Isn't it a fundamental article of faith, that Allāh táālā is transcendent from flaws?' The reason is because, this issue – and Deobandi blind following – has reached such nadir, that one of their apparently better-knowing fellows said on an internet forum:¹⁹⁶

Where does it say it is intrinsically impossible for Allah to have a flaw? I quoted shaykh Buti earlier as saying "He is not disabled to do so, but He is exalted to commit indecencies and all misdeeds...by His own free decision". Hence since lying is a flaw Allah *chooses* to be free of it.

Sub'ḥānAllāh! Exalted is Allāh táālā from such things attributed to Him by irreligious people. In that argument, I struggled to rationalize Shaykh Buti's and Keller's comments. After failing to find some plausible excuse for these two well-known personalities, I realized that it was a mistake to rationalize those words in the first place.

Let the reader be aware, that before Keller's own admission came to the fore, we tried to find an excuse for him, continued to respect him, and even addressed him as 'Shaykh Nuh.' We still withhold from criticizing Shaykh Buti as the attribution to him is doubtful.¹⁹⁷ Concerning Nuh Keller, we said: 'perhaps, he was explaining the other position in the article... perhaps he did not believe it himself...' But alas! Keller flushed away our excuses down the drain with his confession.

The same irreligious person wrote¹⁹⁸

What makes you so sure my view is blasphemous and problematic and abu Hasan's view isn't? He hasn't provided a single quote (neither from shaykh Ahmad Rida Khan or the kalam scholars) contradicting what I or shaykh Buti have said. Allah is munazzah from lying and it is impossible for Him to lie, but our contention is that it remains in His power, and *this is a result of His choice*. My point simply is since shaykhs Buti and Nuh advocate this opinion and attribute it to the scholars of Asharis (and abu Hasan has not shown anything contrary) why do you not accept this position?

He kept digging the pit further:¹⁹⁹

Allah is munazzah from all flaws - I do not deny this. But *why* is Allah free of all flaws? Is it because of intrinsic impossibility or contingent? You have not addressed this question from the words of the scholars. You have seen shaykh Buti's comments - are *those* comments kufr?

¹⁹⁶ It is not necessary to point who said it; but only that it was said. *wa billahi't tawfiq*.

¹⁹⁷ I had written a cautionary footnote, when a brother brought to my notice that Shaykh Buti has protested against this vile accusation. His clarification was published on a website recently and a translation can be found in **Appendix G**.

¹⁹⁸ And he was offended that I told him he was lying!

¹⁹⁹ In the same argument, circa 2008. Highlighting by underline or boldface was done by the irreligious person himself.

The reason is, when the *úlamā* of *kalām* mention *muḥāl*, they mean *muḥāl dhātī*; or intrinsic impossibility. When they say that it is *muḥāl* for Allāh táālā to have a defect or flaw, they mean it is *muḥāl dhātī*. This is a basic belief and a fundamental premise. I have provided quotes earlier – and Alḥamdulillah, I can cite a hundred more,²⁰⁰ if not more. It should be clear to a Muslim that it is impossible for Allāh táālā to have a flaw or imperfection. Let us summarize the position of *Ahl al-Ḥaqq*:²⁰¹

1. Allāh táālā is transcendent from all flaws
2. It is *muḥāl* for Allāh táālā to have a flaw
3. Unless specified,²⁰² it is *muḥāl dhātī*.
4. Therefore, it is intrinsically, essentially impossible for Allāh táālā to have a flaw.
5. The Person and Attributes of Allāh táālā are *wājib* and not subject to Divine Power.

O Muslim, think! Do you still need a scholar to ratify this basic idea? And you will turn your backs if a scholar – in these perilous times and patchy knowledge of latter scholars – claims otherwise? Read the ḥadīth of RasūlAllāh *ṣallīAllāhu alayhi wa sallam* quoted earlier and be warned; flee with your faith from the influence of corrupt scholars.

Only Allāh táālā gives guidance.

²⁰⁰ which I have omitted here for brevity and hoping that it is enough for a Muslim, whose belief is not shackled in *taqlid ar-radiy*, reprobate blind following of blundering scholars. Al-íyādhu billah.

²⁰¹ As the scholars of this science say: ‘The people of Truth’ or Righteous, Rightfully Guided. *wa billahi’t tawfiq*.

²⁰² see the section above: A primer on Kalām terminology.

VIII. DEFINITION OF KADHIB

Kadhib is falsehood. To say something, that is contrary to what has actually occurred.

1. Imām Sanūsī in his *Al-Muqaddimāt* says:

Ṣidq / Truth: Describes that information which conforms to what has actually occurred; whether it is contrary to the belief [of the utterer/informer] or not.

Kadhib / Falsehood, Lie: That information which is contrary to what has actually occurred; whether it conforms to the belief [of the utterer/informer] or not.

2. In the commentary of *Al-Muqaddimāt*, Al-Bannānī writes:

Truth and falsehood are diametric opposites: where truth is [that saying] which is according to the occurrence and falsehood is [that saying] which is contrary to the occurrence.

3. Zabīdī in *Tāj al-Ārūs*:²⁰³

Imām Raghīb says: Truth and falsehood [*ṣidq - kadhib*] are actually related to speech, whether in the past or in the future; whether related to promise or otherwise. These two are not in the former²⁰⁴ except in speech; and they are not in speech except in information given [*khābar*], unlike other forms of speech. It is therefore, Allāh tālā has said:

Who is more Truthful than Allāh in Speech?²⁰⁵

Who is more Truthful than Allāh in what He Says?²⁰⁶

4. In *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*:²⁰⁷

...because falsehood is an attribute of speech/information [being given]²⁰⁸

5. Al-Shahrastānī in *Nihāyatu'l Iqdām*:²⁰⁹

Truth and falsehood are nothing in reality, except when associated with something, like it is said, 'Truth is information that conforms to what has actually occurred and falsehood is information that is contrary to the actual occurrence.'

6. Al-Farḥārī in *Al-Nibrās*:²¹⁰

Truth and falsehood are attributes of information [*khābar*]

²⁰³ *Tāj al-Ārūs*, Vol.26, Pg.5; entry: s-d-q:

²⁰⁴ Truth and falsehood

²⁰⁵ Sūrah An-Nisā'a v.87

²⁰⁶ Sūrah An-Nisā'a v.122

²⁰⁷ *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif* v8,p211

²⁰⁸ *khābar*

²⁰⁹ *Nihāyatu'l Iqdām fī 'Ilm al-Kalām*, p

²¹⁰ *Al-Nibrās*, Ábd al-Ázīz al-Farḥārī Pg.49.

The reason why I have deemed it necessary to include these definitions is to clarify that truth and falsehood are not things that are separate entities in themselves; when it is said: 'power over truth' or 'power over falsehood', it should not be thought that these can be isolated from speech. These are not individual actions in themselves, unless speech is considered an action; even then, these are attributes that define that 'action' of speech.

Since falsehood is an attribute of speech, it lends its attributes to that speech in which it is found. If falsehood is *hādith*, then that speech is also *hādith*; and if falsehood is *mumkin*, then that speech becomes *mumkin*. And that which is *mumkin* is also *hādith*. But, we know by necessity, that Divine Speech is *wājib*; because it is an attribute of Allāh táālā Most High. Therefore, falsehood would render it *mumkin*; and therefore *hādith*, which are both invalid.

7. Saáduddīn Taftāzānī says,²¹¹ citing Imām Rāzī:

Because we believe that Truth in the Speech of Allāh táālā is pre-eternal, therefore it is impossible for falsehood (to occur); because, when something is proven that it is pre-eternal, it is impossible for its annihilation or non-existence.²¹²

As we have seen by the definitions above, *ṣidq* is the absence of *kadhib* and vice-versa. The other thing is that *kadhib* is a flaw. There is a difference between the Sunni and the Mútazili argument even though, both consider *kadhib* as impossible for Allāh táālā.²¹³ Our basis of ruling impossibility is that *kadhib* is a flaw; and Mútazili argument is that it is an ugly thing. I will avoid repeating quotes, as they shall be mentioned elsewhere, but here are a few more to complete this section.

8. In *Ṭawāliyy al-Anwār*,²¹⁴ under the discussion of Divine Speech

Falsehood is a flaw, and a flaw for Allāh táālā is *muḥāl*.

9. In *Al-Mawāqif*, discussion of Divine Speech²¹⁵

[this issue] that it is impossible for falsehood for Allāh táālā is agreed by all; the Mútazilah say that falsehood is ugly and Allāh táālā does not do ugly things; as for us, it is because it is a flaw, and a flaw for Allāh táālā is *muḥāl* by unanimous agreement²¹⁶

10. Kamāl ibn Humām in *Al-Musāyarah*²¹⁷:

Every semblance of flaw, like ignorance and falsehood, are *mustahīl* for Allāh táālā.

11. Imām Rāzī²¹⁸ writes explaining a verse:

The second attribute of the Word of Allāh is, that it is Truthful; and the proof is that falsehood is a flaw, and a flaw for Allāh táālā is impossible.

²¹¹ *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*, Vol.5, Pg.154

²¹² **ádam**: annihilation. That is, if Truth is pre-eternal, then its **ádam**/non-existence is impossible. Because, if falsehood is considered at any point of time, then Truth is non-existent at that point.

²¹³ Though early Mutazilis said similar to Ismā'īl Dehlavi and his followers, the Deobandis, later Mútazilī scholars abandoned the tradition of their elders. This is why the revival of a position abandoned by Mútazilīs themselves is such a preposterous idea, but the Deobandis and their followers will go to any length to justify statements made by their elders. May Allāh táālā protect us from dumb, blind and mindless following.

²¹⁴ *Ṭawāliyy al-Anwār* Al-Bayḏāwī, Pg.172

²¹⁵ *Al-Mawāqif*, Pg.295

²¹⁶ Ijmā'á of Ahl as-Sunnah scholars. Or the Ijmā'á of all mutakallimun. Or the Ijmā'á of all sane people.

²¹⁷ in *Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, under Sūrah Al-Baqarah, Verse 80: **Do you say about Allāh táālā, that which you do not know?**

²¹⁸ Fakhruddīn Muḥammad ibn Úmar ar-Rāzī (d.606AH), the Imām of later *kalām* scholars.

IX. STATEMENTS OF SCHOLARS THAT KADHIB IS MUĤĀL

I will now list, InshāAllāh, quotes from books of *kalām* that clearly say that *kadhib* is *muĥāl*; remember, that *muĥāl* is *dhātī* and not *áradī* unless explicitly mentioned.

1. In *Sharĥ al-Maqāšid*, under the discussion of Speech:²¹⁹

Falsehood is *muĥāl* by the unanimity of all scholars; because falsehood is a flaw as agreed by all rational people; and it (falsehood) is *muĥāl* for Allāh táālā [summarized].

2. Under the discussion of *ĥusn-qubĥ*, in the same book:²²⁰

We have clarified earlier in the discussion of Speech, that falsehood is impossible for Allāh táālā without causing a circular argument.

3. In the same book,²²¹ under the discussion of *taklīf bi'l muĥāl*²²²

Ignorance and falsehood are both impossible for Allāh táālā; Exalted is He from such things.

4. In the same book:²²³

(Considering) falsehood in the saying²²⁴ of Allāh táālā is ugly even if it is on account of a beneficial objective; and this would prevent many other kinds of good as this would cause untold problems and a patent nuisance; an invitation for the revilement and vilification of Islam, as is obvious. Among such examples²²⁵ are the sayings of philosophers concerning the hereafter and denials of the irreligious. This also invalidates the *ijmā'á* that the infidels will stay in hell forever²²⁶ as this is among the clear messages given by Allāh táālā.

5. In *Al-Mawāqif*, under the discussion of Divine Speech:²²⁷

[this issue] that it is impossible for falsehood for Allāh táālā is agreed by all; the Mútazilah say that falsehood is ugly and Allāh táālā does not do ugly things; as for us²²⁸ it is because it is a flaw, and a flaw for Allāh táālā is *muĥāl* by unanimous agreement.²²⁹

²¹⁹ *Sharĥ al-Maqāšid*, Vol.2, Pg.293

²²⁰ *Sharĥ al-Maqāšid*, Vol.2, Pg.143

²²¹ *Sharĥ al-Maqāšid*, Vol.3, Pg. 299. Even though, it is interspersed as a part of the cited objection, the intention of the author is apparent by his exoneration: *táālā án dhālik* : exalted is He from such things.

²²² *taklīf bi'l muĥāl*: that Allāh táālā does not hold us responsible by ordering us to do the impossible.

²²³ *Sharĥ al-Maqāšid*, Vol.5, Pg.154-155

²²⁴ *akĥbār*, plural of *khābar*: is news, message, information; but here it is general for everything said by Allāh táālā.

²²⁵ of potential attacks on Islam, if we considered falsehood possible

²²⁶ it is unanimously agreed that disbelievers will stay in hell forever, as informed by Allāh taala. If falsehood is considered possible, then this information will be invalidated.

²²⁷ *Al-Mawāqif*, Pg.295

²²⁸ Ahl as-Sunnah

²²⁹ *Ijmā'á* of Ahl as-Sunnah scholars.

6. In *Al-Mawāqif* and its exegesis *Sharh Al-Mawāqif* in the discussion of *ḥusn-qubh*:²³⁰

The basis of our saying that falsehood is impossible for Allāh tāālā is not because it is considered as an ugly thing by intellect;²³¹ because, if falsehood ceases to be considered ugly, then it necessitates that falsehood does not remain *muḥāl* anymore; therefore, there is another basis for this,²³² which we have explained earlier.²³³

7. In the same book, under discussion of miracles:²³⁴

It has been mentioned earlier in the discussion of Divine Speech that our position concerning Divine Attributes is that falsehood is impossible²³⁵ for Allāh tāālā, Glorified and Exalted is He.

8. In *Ṭawāliyy al-Anwār*,²³⁶ under the discussion of Divine Speech

Falsehood is a flaw, and a flaw for Allāh tāālā is *muḥāl*.

9. Kamāl ibn Humām in *Al-Musāyarah*:²³⁷

Every semblance of flaw, like ignorance and falsehood, are *mustaḥīl* for Allāh tāālā.

10. Kamāluddīn Muḥammad ibn Abi'sh Sharīf in the exegesis of his teacher's work mentioned above, titled *Al-Musāmarah*:²³⁸

If one objects: The point of contention is that these two [*ḥusn and qubh*] are [considered] in actions of creation [*afā'āl al-ibād*] not in the Attributes of Allāh tāālā.

We say: There is no difference of opinion among Ashārīs or others that, whatever is considered as a flaw for creation, then, the Creator is also Transcendent from that. He is free from it and it is essentially impossible [*muḥāl*] for Allāh tāālā. Falsehood is an attribute of flaw/fault for creation. [Hence, it is *muḥāl* for Allāh tāālā as well].

If one objects: We do not accept that [falsehood] is an attribute of imperfection for creation absolutely; because, sometimes, it is also good for them. Rather, it is obligatory for them to utter a falsehood to save an innocent person when a pursuer asks about him and intends to kill him unjustly.

We say: It is obvious that *kadhib*/falsehood is a flaw according to intellect; and to utter falsehood is [usually] because of some necessity; [such as] for the weak, to defend [themselves] with falsehood, [which] does not apply for Allāh tāālā.

²³⁰ *Sharh al-Mawāqif*, Sharīf al-Jurjānī, Vol.8, Pg.214

²³¹ *qubh al-áqlī*

²³² that falsehood is *muḥāl*

²³³ that it is because falsehood is a flaw and a flaw is impossible for Allāh tāālā.

²³⁴ *Sharh al-Mawāqif*, Sharīf al-Jurjānī, Vol.8

²³⁵ *munṭaniy*

²³⁶ *Ṭawāliyy al-Anwār*, Al-Bayḏāwī. Pg.172.

²³⁷ *Al-Musāyarah*, Pg.326

²³⁸ *Al-Musāmarah Sharh Al-Musāyarah*, Pg.178

It is not valid to use this analogy for Allāh táālā, who is Omnipotent, whose Power is Absolute and is Absolutely Independent - Glory to Him.

Therefore, it can be concluded that, *kadhib* or lying is an attribute of flaw, even when you attribute the Hallowed Lord Almighty with it. It is absolutely impossible [*mustahīl*] to attribute Him -Glory to Him - with it [falsehood]

11. Imām Fakhruddīn Rāzī in his *Tafsīr Al-Kabīr*:

When Allāh táālā says: 'And he shall not renege on His Promise'²³⁹ proves that Allāh táālā is free²⁴⁰ from falsehood in His promise of reward and punishment.²⁴¹ Our scholars²⁴² have said that it is because falsehood is an attribute of flaw, and flaw/defect is *muḥāl* for Allāh táālā. The Mútazilah said that because falsehood is ugly, and it is impossible that He does ugly things; therefore, falsehood is *muḥāl* for Him.

12. Allāh táālā says:²⁴³

The Words of your Lord have been fulfilled with Truth and Justice; none can change His Words, and He is the Hearer, the Knower.

Imām Rāzī writes explaining the above verse:

The second attribute of the Word of Allāh is that it is Truthful; and the proof is that falsehood is a flaw, and a flaw for Allāh táālā is impossible.

13. He further says:

The validity of all the evidence²⁴⁴ from revelation, is dependent on [the premise that] falsehood is *muḥāl* for Allāh táālā.

14. Allāh táālā says: 'Allāh táālā shall not take a son, glorified and exalted is he from such a thing.' The Mútazilah used this verse as their evidence²⁴⁵ (for an idea of theirs) and refuting them, Imām Rāzī says:²⁴⁶

Our people²⁴⁷ answered, 'because falsehood is *muḥāl* for Allāh táālā'

15. Saáduddīn Taftāzānī says,²⁴⁸ citing Imām Rāzī:

Because we believe that Truth in the Speech of Allāh táālā is pre-eternal, therefore it is impossible for falsehood (to occur); because, when something is proven that it is pre-eternal, it is impossible for its annihilation or non-existence [*ádám*].

²³⁹ Sūrah Al-Baqarah, Verse.80

²⁴⁰ *munazzah*: meaning free from defect, transcendent from all faults.

²⁴¹ *waád – wayīd*

²⁴² *aṣ-ḥābunā*: lit. our companions, meaning our scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah or Ashāriṣ.

²⁴³ Sūrah Al-Anáám, Verse.115

²⁴⁴ *dalāyil al-samýiyah*: proof from revelation

²⁴⁵ lit. 'those things held by the Mútazilah'

²⁴⁶ *Tafsir Al-Kabīr*, Imām Rāzī. Sūrah Maryam, Verse 35.

²⁴⁷ Ahl as-Sunnah

²⁴⁸ *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*, Vol.5, Pg.154

16. In *Sharḥ al-Muqaddimāt*, Imām Sanūsī says:²⁴⁹

He who Informs, our Lord – Glorified and Exalted is He – is free from the flaw of falsehood both by rational and *sharāyī* proofs.²⁵⁰

17. In the same book, discussing *jāyiz* he says:²⁵¹

[This would necessitate] falsehood and giving information contrary to its occurrence, which is *mustaḥīl*.

After a few lines he says:

This would necessitate falsehood for Him, and falsehood is rationally impossible for Him.

18. Jalāluddīn al-Dawwānī in his commentary²⁵² of *Āqāyid al-Āḍudiyyah*:

I say: Falsehood is a flaw and a flaw for Allāh tāālā is *muḥāl*. It is not included in the *mumkināt* and neither is it included in Divine Power. This, just as His Divine Power does not include anything that implies that there is a flaw in Him – exalted is He – like ignorance [*jahl*] and powerlessness [*ājz*]; or negation of the attribute of Speech or any other attribute of perfection.

19. After a few lines he says yet once again:

A flaw for Allāh tāālā is *muḥāl āqlī*.²⁵³

20. In *Sharḥ Aqāyid an-Nasafī*:²⁵⁴

It is *muḥāl* for falsehood in the Speech of Allāh tāālā.

21. *Tafsīr Bayḍāwī*²⁵⁵ explaining the verse: ‘**And who is more Truthful than Allāh tāālā?**’²⁵⁶

Here, it is being refuted that anyone can be more Truthful than Allāh tāālā. Because, falsehood can never approach His message, His Speech; because it is a flaw, and [thus] it is *muḥāl* for Allāh tāālā.

22. *Sharḥ Al-Sanūsīyah*:²⁵⁷

Falsehood for Allāh tāālā is impossible [*muḥāl*] because it is baseness, and it is a contemptible²⁵⁸ thing.

²⁴⁹ *Sharḥ al-Muqaddimāt* p.158

²⁵⁰ *āqlan wa naqlan*

²⁵¹ Ibid, Pg.79

²⁵² *Sharḥ Āqāyid al-Āḍudiyyah*, Jalāluddīn Dawwānī, Pg.65

²⁵³ Before some foolish objection is raised by saying: ‘A ha! it is *muḥāl āqlī*, not *muḥāl sharāyī*’ one has to understand that anything that is claimed as *muḥāl sharāyī* should be proven from *nuṣūṣ*: that is the Qur’ān and Sunnah. Where is such proof that says: ‘Flaw is Possible?’ al-īyādhu billāh.

²⁵⁴ *Sharḥ Aqāyid an-Nasafī*, Pg.71

²⁵⁵ *Tafsīr Anwāru’t Tanzīl wa Asrār at-Ta’wīl*, Al-Bayḍāwī

²⁵⁶ Sūrah An-Nisā’a, Verse.87

²⁵⁷ *Sanūsīyah ālā Al-Jazāyiriyah*, Pg.

²⁵⁸ It is therefore, a flaw; and a flaw for Allāh tāālā is *muḥāl*.

23. Tafsīr *Madārik*:²⁵⁹

'And whose Speech is more Truthful than Allāh táālā?': Here, the interrogative tense is actually a negation; that is, 'There is no one more Truthful than Him' in His saying, His promise of reward or punishment; because of the impossibility of falsehood for Allāh táālā due to its ugliness,²⁶⁰ because it is saying something other than what something is, in reality.

24. Tafsīr Abu's Sūūd Ímādī:²⁶¹

'And whose Speech is more Truthful than Allāh táālā?': This is a negation; because none can be more truthful than Allāh táālā, whether in His Promise or any of His sayings²⁶² because of [falsehood being an] impossibility; and why not! After all, falsehood is *muḥāl* for Allāh táālā but not for others.

25. Tafsīr *Rūḥ al-Bayān*:²⁶³

'And whose Speech is more Truthful than Allāh táālā?': This is a negation, a rejection that anyone else can be more truthful than Allāh táālā; because falsehood is a flaw and it is *muḥāl* for Allāh táālā unlike for others.²⁶⁴

26. Sayfuddin al-Ab'harī in his commentary²⁶⁵ of *Al-Mawāqif*:

[Everybody is] in agreement, that falsehood is impossible for Allāh táālā, because lying is a flaw and a flaw for Allāh táālā is *muḥāl*.

27. *Sharḥ Jalāluddin al-Dawwānī* :²⁶⁶

Falsehood, *kadhib* is a flaw; and flaw for Allāh táālā is *muḥāl*. It cannot be considered among contingent thing [*mumkināt*], nor is it included in the Divine Power just as all other such defects [are not included in His Power] like ignorance and powerlessness, weakness.

28. In the same text:²⁶⁷

Neither ignorance, nor falsehood – for they are flaws; and a flaw for Allāh táālā is *muḥāl*.

²⁵⁹ *Tafsīr Madāriku't Tanzīl*, also known as Tafsīr an-Nasafī; Sūrah An-Nisā'a, Verse.87

²⁶⁰ Alahazrat's comment from *Sub'ḥān as-Subbūḥ* : The Imām, may Allāh have mercy on him, said 'ugly' in his argument, based on the obvious; [not the inherent ugliness as claimed by the Mūtazilah] and because, he was an Imām of our Māturīdī madh'hab. The Ashārī imams like the author of *Al-Mawāqif* [Al-Ījī] and the author of *Mafātīḥ* [Rāzī] as you have seen their quotes have veered away from this proof for this reason. However, that a thing is considered ugly rationally, as in the above example, [that is falsehood is an ugly thing] is something agreed upon by the rationalists [*uqalā*.] These Ashārī imāms, may Allāh have mercy upon them, have themselves attested in their quotes. So do not be distracted by such statements, as we have hinted in our introduction.'

²⁶¹ *Irsḥād al-Āql al-Salīm*, Abu's Sūūd Ímādī. Sūrah An-Nisā'a, Verse.87

²⁶² *Akhbār*: message, news, information – saying, in general.

²⁶³ Sūrah An-Nisā'a, Verse.87

²⁶⁴ that is, *kadhib* or a flaw for others is not impossible/*muḥāl*.

²⁶⁵ Cf *Sub'ḥān as-Subbūḥ*.

²⁶⁶ Jalāluddīn al-Dawwānī, Commentary on *Áqīdah Áḍudiyyah*: the discussion of *álā* p.73

²⁶⁷ *Ibid*, the discussion of *laysa*, p.66-67

29. Ālī al-Qārī in his commentary²⁶⁸ on *Fiqh al-Akbar* of Imām al-Aázam:
Falsehood for Allāh táālā is *muḥāl*.

30. *Kanz al-Fawāyid*:²⁶⁹

Glorified and sanctified is He from falsehood: whether by *sharāyī* proof or rational proof; because it is such an ugly thing, that the intellect readily recognizes the ugliness of falsehood, and does not require a proof from *sharīāh* [to consider its odiousness]. So it [falsehood] is *muḥāl* for Allāh táālā, by rational and *sharāyī* evidence as validated by Ibn Humām and others.

31. In Muḥibbullāh al-Bihāri's *Musallam al-Thubūt*:²⁷⁰

The Mútaẓilah said that if it were not a rational argument, it would not be impossible for Allāh táālā to lie; and the answer to this is that falsehood is a flaw, and it is necessary to consider Allāh táālā transcendent from flaws. And why not, as we have previously mentioned that it is a rational argument by the agreement of all rationalists.

Because, flaw is among those things, which cause a negation in the essentially necessary attributes of the Creator – Truthful exalted is He – and it [falsehood/flaw] is *muḥāl* for Allāh táālā, Glory to Him.

32. Niẓāmuddin Sihālwī commenting on the above:²⁷¹

Falsehood is a flaw because this is a cause for negation in the essentially necessary [*wājib dhātī*] attribute of the Lord Almighty. Therefore, it is a rational impossibility.²⁷² Even those philosophers who do not consider themselves bound to the *sharīāh*²⁷³ deem it an impossibility. Because, necessary²⁷⁴ and falsehood cannot be together as we have proved earlier in the discussion of Divine Speech.

33. Mayārah in his commentary of *Murshid al-Mu'yīn*:²⁷⁵

... and that is falsehood, and contradicting the information given, which is *muṣṭaḥīl*...

34. Imām Rāzī in *Muḥaṣṣal*:²⁷⁶

Because, falsehood is a flaw; and it is *muḥāl* for Allāh táālā.

²⁶⁸ *Minaḥ ar-Rawḍ al-Az'har fi sharḥ al-Fiqh al-Akbar*, Ālī al-Qārī Pg.23

²⁶⁹ Cf *Sub'ḥān as-Subbūḥ*

²⁷⁰ *Musallam al-Thubūt*, Vol.1, Pg.46

²⁷¹ *Fawātiḥ ar-Raḥmūt*, Vol.1, Pg.46

²⁷² the discussion of theology/doctrine is under two important categories: *sharāyī* : as revealed by the *sharīāh* and *āqlī*: rational, that which can be perceived and validated by the intellect. There is a third category *āādī*: habitual, conventional; but this third category is not relevant to our discussion.

²⁷³ that is, philosophers who do not believe in revelation (yet, not atheists) do not admit the *sharāyī* proof; the *sharāyī* proof is only for those who believe in revelation. the rational philosopher admits only the rational proof – here, *dalīl āqlī*.

²⁷⁴ *wājib*: an intrinsical, essential attribute

²⁷⁵ *Al-Durr al-Thamīn*, Pg.17

²⁷⁶ *Muḥaṣṣal Afkār al-Mutaqaddimīn wa'l Muta-akh'khirīn*, Imām Rāzī. Pg.185

35. Even Naṣīr Tūsi²⁷⁷ does not object in his commentary to the above:²⁷⁸

I say: If *kadhib* is ruled *muḥāl* by revealed proof [*dalīl samyī*] then a circular argument will ensue.

36. Shāh Ābd al-Āzīz Dihlawī in *Tafsīr Āzīzī*, explaining the verse '**And Allāh will never renege on His Promise**'²⁷⁹ says:²⁸⁰

The speech²⁸¹ of Allāh táālā is pre-eternal; falsehood is an enormous defect in [the attribute of] speech. Therefore, it is absolutely absent from the Attributes of Allāh táālā as He is free from every flaw and defect; to say something other than the actual occurrence [falsehood] is absolutely a flaw.

37. Imām Rāzī again in his *Iytiqādāt* refuting the Mútazilī positions:²⁸²

But falsehood is *muḥāl* for Allāh táālā – Exalted is Allāh from such things they attribute Him with!²⁸³

38. Abd al-Qahir al-Baghdādī in *Al-Milal wa'n Niḥal* commenting on the confusion of the Mútazilah whether falsehood is possible for Allāh táālā:²⁸⁴

...and they would consider falsehood *muḥāl* as we consider it *muḥāl*.

39. Al-Shahrastānī in *Al-Milal wa'n Niḥal* describing a Mútazilī faction and listing their heresies:²⁸⁵

The first [heresy] about Divine Power: That he²⁸⁶ said that Allāh táālā has power to lie and oppress;²⁸⁷ and if He die lie and oppress, He would be known as the lying, oppressing Lord.²⁸⁸ Exalted is Allāh from what he says!

40. Imam Abu'l Ḥasan Al-Ashārī in *Al-Maqālāt* discussing the Mútazilah heresy that Allāh táālā has power over falsehood:²⁸⁹

These statements are so ugly that no one considers it good to describe a righteous Muslim in such words! Similarly, one cannot describe Allāh táālā with such ascriptions – Glorified is He and Exalted from such things.

²⁷⁷ Naṣīruddīn Abū Abdullāh Muḥammad al-Ṭūsī, d.672 AH / 1274 CE. Shiite scholar who wrote justifications to the ideas of ancient philosophers attempting to refute Sunni kalām scholars.

²⁷⁸ *Talkhīṣ al-Muḥaṣṣal*, Pg.186

²⁷⁹ Sūrah Al-Baqarah, Verse.80

²⁸⁰ Cf *Sub'ḥān as-Subbūḥ*

²⁸¹ *khābar*

²⁸² *Iytiqādāt Firaq al-Muslimīn wa'l Mushrikīn*, Imām Rāzī. Pg.45

²⁸³ táālā Allāhu ámmā yaqūlūna úluwwan kabīrā

²⁸⁴ *Al-Milal wa'n Niḥal*, Al-Baghdādī, Pg.138

²⁸⁵ *Al-Milal wa'n Niḥal*, Al-Shahrastānī Pg.54, Mardāriyyah among the Mútazilah.

²⁸⁶ Yūsā ibn Ṣabīḥ, Abū Mūsa al-Mardār. Noti

²⁸⁷ *kadhib, ḡulm*

²⁸⁸ *ilāhan kādhiban ḡāliman*. [we seek Allāh's refuge from such madness].

²⁸⁹ *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, Vol.2 Pg.209, Maqālah 260.

41. Bājūrī in his explanation of *Jawharah* says:²⁹⁰

... there is a unanimous agreement²⁹¹ that in all that He has said, Allāh táālā is free from falsehood.

42. The leader of Ahlu's Sunnah, Imām Abū'l Ḥasan Al-Ashārī in *Al-Lumá*:²⁹²

Similarly, it is not permissible to attribute Him with falsehood, not because it is ugly but because falsehood is *mustahīl* for Him. It is not permissible to attribute Him with Power over falsehood, just as it is not permissible to attribute Him with movement and Ignorance.

Disproving this at length, he indicates the odiousness of the idea once again thus:²⁹³

...suppose we consider the Creator can lie – Exalted is He from such a thing!

43. Imam Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī in *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*:²⁹⁴

And we have said earlier refuting the Mútazilah, which is much more clear than this, along with what this necessitates in another issue: that is, they attribute Allāh táālā with having power over falsehood, vileness and oppression...²⁹⁵

And then, after criticising their positions, he says:

Thereafter, ruling this impossible according to our madh'hab is easy: that is, [we say] the inclusion of this in Divine Power is *muḥāl*.

Lastly, two important *mutakallimīn* explain why *kadhib* is *muḥāl* and that it cannot be proved *muḥāl* by revelation alone.²⁹⁶

44. Imām al-Ḥaramayn in his *Kitāb al-Irshād* says:²⁹⁷

Know, may Allāh táālā guide you: the fundamental principles of doctrine are [three]:

- a) that, which can be known rationally and it is not possible to know it by evidence of revelation
- b) that, which is known by evidence of revelation and not possible to know rationally
- c) that, which can be known either by evidence of revelation and by rational proof

²⁹⁰ *Tuḥfatu'l Murīd Sharḥ Jawharatu't Tawhīd*, pg.145.

²⁹¹ Ijmāá

²⁹² *Kitāb Al-Lumá* , Imām Al-Ashārī. Pg.118,

²⁹³ Ibid.

²⁹⁴ *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, Imām Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī. Pg.200

²⁹⁵ *kadhib*, *saḥ*, *ḡulm*

²⁹⁶ That is, it is rationally impossible – *muḥāl áqlī* and this is the bone of contention.

²⁹⁷ *Kitāb al-Irshād*, pg.358: On Proofs from Revelation (*sam'yīyyāt*)

That, which cannot be perceived except by the intellect, is every principle of religion which is made known by the Speech of Allāh táālā and its necessary attribute that it is True;²⁹⁸ because the validity of all revealed proofs rely upon the Speech of Allāh táālā. So it should be established first that Speech is a necessary attribute. Thus, it is impossible to know this by revealed proof.²⁹⁹

And that which cannot be known, except by revealed proof is the ordaining that a certain contingent thing will come into existence.³⁰⁰ It is not necessary for something to really exist just because it is contingent; and the existence of something which is hidden from us cannot be known, except by way of revelation.

45. Imām Rāzī in the commentary of the verse:³⁰¹

The second attribute: from the attributes of the Word of Allah is, that it is truthful. The proof is that because falsehood is a flaw, and it is impossible for Allāh táālā to have an attribute of flaw. It is not permissible to prove that falsehood is *muḥāl* for Allāh táālā [just] by revelation [*dalāyil as-sam'yiyah*] because the validity of proof by revelation [is itself] dependent on the [premise] that falsehood is impossible for Allāh táālā. Because, if we attested impossibility of lying [*imtināá al-kadhib*] by narrated proofs, it becomes a circular argument and [therefore renders it] invalid.

Know, that just as this proves that it is *muḥāl* for Allāh táālā to renege on His promise of reward [*khulf fi'l waád*], it also proves that it is *muḥāl* for Him to renege on His promise of punishment [*khulf fi'l wayíd*] unlike what Wāḥidī has said in his tafsīr of the verse, **Whosoever kills a believer deliberately, then his punishment is hellfire, wherein he shall abide forever.**³⁰² [Wāḥidī said:] It is possible for Allah ta'ala to forego His promise of punishment.

This is because His promise of reward and punishment [*waád* and *wayíd*] are Words of Allah; and this verse proves that it is mandatory to attribute the Word of Allah with Truth; therefore just as renegeing on His promise of reward is impossible [*munṭaniy*] so also is not fulfilling His promise of punishment.

And only Allāh táālā gives guidance.

²⁹⁸ That is, it is necessary [wājib] for the Speech of Allāh táālā to be Truthful; and only a rational proof can attest it, not the revealed proof as it would cause a circular argument.

²⁹⁹ That Allāh táālā Speaks and His Speech is Truthful; because this causes a circular argument.

³⁰⁰ wuqūyi mā yajūzu fi'l áql

³⁰¹ Sūrah Anáám, Verse 115.

³⁰² Sūrah An-Nisā'a, Verse 93.

X. THE PRINCIPLE OF EXPLOSION AND THE DEOBANDI PROPOSITION

From the point of view of classical logic, the proposition is absurd. This is an attestation of both opposites, and admitting contradictions at the same time and the same place: "He is truthful and speaks the truth absolutely, but still a possibility of falsehood exists."

From the Wikipedia:³⁰³

The *principle of explosion* is the law of classical logic and a few other systems (e.g., intuitionistic logic) according to which "anything follows from a contradiction"; that is, once a contradiction has been asserted, any proposition (or its negation) can be inferred from it. In symbolic terms, the principle of explosion can be expressed in the following way (where " \vdash " symbolizes the relation of logical consequence):

$$\{\phi, \neg\phi\} \vdash \psi$$

"If one claims something is both true (ϕ) and not true ($\neg\phi$), one can logically derive *any* conclusion (ψ)." The principle of explosion is also known as *ex falso quodlibet*, *ex falso sequitur quodlibet* (EFSQ for short) Latin: "from falsehood/contradiction (follows) anything".

Al-Āmidī explaining the definition³⁰⁴ of *tanaquḍ*/contradiction says:

That which describes opposites such that, if one is deemed possible, the other is impossible and vice versa. For example, if we prove truth for one thing (intrinsically), the opposite proposition automatically becomes false.

If you consider both propositions – i.e., contradictions valid at the same time, we end up with the principle of explosion. Alahazrat³⁰⁵ explains it thus:

If you understand this premise well, you will see that considering falsehood to be included in the Divine Power of Allāh will necessitate a possibility of falsehood in any information given by Him. If one says: 'After all, the information given by Allāh says that He has never spoken an untruth nor will He tell a lie, in spite of having Power to do so', then there is no reliance on this either.³⁰⁶

Because this is also another information coming from Him – and because you have already said that there is possibility of falsehood in His speech, it is nigh possible that His

³⁰³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Principle_of_explosion. This is the simplest quote I could find, and definitions in books of Logic (that I looked into) are not self-explanatory and require further elaboration.

³⁰⁴ *Al-Mubīn fī Mānī Alfāẓ al-Ūlamā al-Mutakallimīn*, entry 53.

³⁰⁵ *Sub'ḥān as-Subbūḥ*

³⁰⁶ The reader must remember that Imām Aḥmed Ridā is positing these statements for the sake of argument and obviously to refute them by showing the foolishness of such argument.

assurance that He will not tell a lie is itself a lie.³⁰⁷ How then, can we be certain that this contingent thing, which is included in the Power of Allāh did not occur?³⁰⁸

In summary, if falsehood is rationally contingent [*mumkin áqlī*], then it is not rationally impossible [*mustahīl aqlī*] as you yourself claim. Concerning the impossibility by canon [*mustahīl sharayī*], then it can be proven only by revealed proof and all revealed evidence is based on the Speech of Allāh (as we have seen in Imām a-Ĥaramayn's quote above). Therefore, to prove that falsehood is *mustahīl sharayī*, you will have to first prove that the evidence which proves it is true; inevitably, this becomes a circular argument [and hence renders it absurd and invalid].

Thus, you cannot prove that falsehood is *mustahīl sharayī*; (and you already claim that it is not *mustahīl áqlī*) – so now the Speech of Allāh becomes [as unreliable] like that of Zayd and Ámr.³⁰⁹ Exalted is Allāh from such things they attribute Him. When all of this is unreliable, then how can you have faith in Judgement day, Reckoning, Paradise, and Hell – all proven from revelation?

Deobandis go straight to the comment that it is *mumkin* and not *mustahīl* without proving anything. Note that *mustahīl áradī* or contingently impossible or *imtināá bi'l ghayr* is actually a form of *mumkin* as explained earlier. In their various 'defence' arguments, they struggle with basic terminology, but still have the audacity to criticise masters of the discipline.

May Allāh táālā give sense to their followers and show them the right way.

³⁰⁷ *al-iyādhū billāh*

³⁰⁸ a) The only way to know that a contingent thing can be or cannot be is by being informed by Divine Speech.

b) If falsehood is considered as contingent and within Divine Power, then the only way to know that it has occurred or not is by Divine Speech.

c) And since the possibility of falsehood exists in Divine Speech, there can be no reliance on the assurance that Divine Speech can never be false.

³⁰⁹ An Arabic/Persian/Urdu expression equivalent of 'Tom, Dick and Harry' in English.

XI. KHULF FI'L WAYĪD

This is one of the commonly known, minor points of disagreement among *kalām* scholars. I will not elaborate on this point itself, as it is not the purpose of this paper; those interested can look it up in *kalām* treatises or specific monographs like Al-Qārī's *Al-Qawl al-Sadīd*. But, before we proceed to examine the issue in the context of *kadhib*/falsehood, it is necessary to define two concepts:

Khulf fi'l Waád: Allāh táālā has promised reward to those who obey him and are righteous. This promise is mentioned in various verses of the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. The question is, can Allāh táālā renege on his promise of reward? This concept of 'reneging from the promise of reward' is known as *khulf fi'l waád*.

Khulf fi'l Wayīd: Allāh táālā has promised punishment to those who disobey him and are evil. This promise is described in various verses of the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. The second question is, can Allāh táālā forego his promise of punishment? This concept of 'foregoing or waiving the promise/threat of punishment' or 'not fulfilling the threat of punishment' is known as *khulf fi'l wayīd*.

Both are promises, but to differentiate between these two kinds of promises, different words are used in Arabic: *waád* for promise of reward and *wayīd* for promise of punishment. Accordingly, in English, we shall use the phrases '**promise of reward**' for *waád*, and '**threat of punishment**' for *wayīd*. Similarly, *khulf*³¹⁰ is '**reneging**' for reward and '**foregoing**' punishment in certain places.

1. Ālī al-Qārī explaining³¹¹ this subtle difference says:

In the lexicon, *waád* promise [of good] is a more general term than *aw-ád* promise of retribution. It is said: 'I have promised someone [*waádtu*] – whether good or bad' and if it is not qualified by mentioning bad, I would say: *waádtu*, I promised. And if it is not qualified by good, I would say: *awádtu*, I promised retribution.

2. Thereafter, Al-Qārī summarizes the Ashārī position thus:

Khulf al-Wayīd is not possible in the case of disbelievers, according to the unanimity of scholars. This is the summarization of what is discussed in *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid* and *Sharḥ al-Áqāyid*.

Sáduddīn Taftāzānī in *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*:³¹²

khulf fi'l waád – reneging on promise of reward is not possible, and there is an *Ijmā* on this position. Compared to ***khulf fi'l wayīd***; and because it is magnanimity and grace, some have allowed it [as possible]. Yes, that this necessitates falsehood and not keeping one's word, which is a problem...

Notice that Taftāzānī does not say, *kadhib* is accepted by some; he clearly says that this *khulf fi'l wayīd* raises the issue of falsehood – and the basic premise is falsehood is impossible – therefore, this is a problem. Thereafter he proposes explanations to ward off this accusation. Just think: if Ashārīs accept *a priori* that falsehood is *mumkin*, then all arguments in this topic become meaningless – what are these Ashārī imams trying to prove after all?

³¹⁰ literally, opposing, contradicting, reneging.

³¹¹ Al-Qawl al-Sadīd fi Khulf al-Wayīd, Ālī al-Qārī. All quotes by Al-Qārī in this section are from this book, unless mentioned otherwise.

³¹² *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*, Vol.5, Pg.152

3. Imām Bājūrī says³¹³ in the commentary of the verse:³¹⁴

wa munjizun liman arāda waáduh

And He shall reward those whom He Willed and [so] promised [them the reward]

The author³¹⁵ indicates by this, that concerning the Divine Promise of paradise for believers, Allāh táālā will not renege from it (and this is proved by shariáh absolutely) as He said: **This is the Promise of Allāh; and verily Allāh will not renege from His promise.**³¹⁶ Some scholars of tafsīr said that this refers to His promise of reward. Because, if He reneges on His promise of reward, this would necessitate falsehood, indecency and breaking a promise. This³¹⁷ is invalid, therefore that which causes this³¹⁸ is also invalid.

Therefore, *khulf fi'l waád* is a flaw; it is necessary [*wājib*] to believe in the Transcendence of Allāh táālā [from all flaws]. Both Ashárīs and Māturīdīs agree upon this.

As for *khulf fi'l waýid*, Ashárīs considered it possible; because this foregoing of promise is not a flaw, but rather considered as magnanimity, which is praiseworthy, as a poet³¹⁹ says:

**wa inni in awádtuhu aw waád-tuhu
la mukhlifu iyáādī wa munjizu mawýidī**

And I, if I promise a reward or threaten retribution
I may forego my threat of retribution but I will fulfill my promise of reward

Moreover, those who objected on the possibility of foregoing threat of punishment, they also said that it necessitates numerous problems among which is: falsehood in the information given by Allāh táālā; and there is a unanimous agreement³²⁰ that in all that He has said, Allāh táālā is free from falsehood.

4. In Musāmarah/Musāyarah:³²¹

{The author of *Úmdah*} - Állāmah Abu'l Barakat an-Nasafi - {among *Ĥanafīs* said: "a mu'min to remain forever in hell and a kafir to go to paradise is permissible by intellect according to them} - that is the Ashárīs. {They say however, there is revealed evidence against this occurring.} Therefore it is ruled that it is impossible [*yamtaniy*] on account of evidence from revelation [*dalīl as-sama'a*] and we *Ĥanafīs* say: It is not possible." [Here ends the statement of *Úmdah* along with its explanation³²²].

³¹³ *Tuĥfatu'l Murīd Sharĥ Jawharatu't Tawĥīd*, pg.145.

³¹⁴ *Jawharah at-Tawĥīd*, verse 46.

³¹⁵ Burĥānuddīn Ibrāhīm Al-Laqqānī.

³¹⁶ Sūrah Ar-Raád v.31

³¹⁷ *lāzim* :this is what is necessitated if you suppose *khulf* possible

³¹⁸ *malzūm*: that is, reneging on a promise, is the premiss.

³¹⁹ Abū Ámr ibn al-Álā'a, according to Al-Qārī.

³²⁰ *ijmāá*

³²¹ *Al-Musāyarah with Al-Musāmarah*, Pg.178 , text in brown color is from *Al-Musayarah*.

³²² Ibn Humam ending his citation from *Úmdah* of Al-Nasafi.

5. Jalāluddīn al-Dawwānī in his commentary³²³ of *Áqāyid al-Áđudiyyah*:

Rather, the answer to this objection³²⁴ is what we have indicated earlier that *waád* and *wayíd*³²⁵ are based on conditions and restrictions; and these conditions are known by *sharāyī* evidence. So it is possible to not fulfilling these promises based on the absence of the conditions – and the reason for making His Intention known, is to persuade [to do good] and dissuade³²⁶ [from evil].

6. He writes a little later:³²⁷

Know that some scholars have held the opinion that foregoing the threat of punishment [*khulf fi'l wayíd*] is contingent [and thus included in His Divine Power] for Allāh táālā.

7. And cites Al-Wāhīdī³²⁸ who narrates a ḥadīth that RasūlAllāh *ṣallAllāhu álayhi wa sallam* said:

To those, whom Allāh táālā has promised a reward for their deeds, He will fulfill it; and to those whom He has promised punishment for their deeds, then it is His Choice³²⁹ [and He may forego it]'

One of the defence arguments is, that the 'promise' of punishment is actually making known the intention³³⁰ that He *might* punish; not saying³³¹ that He *will* punish. And because, it is just an intention, the implication of falsehood does not arise. The other explanation given is that it is a conditional and not absolute, as explained above.

8. In Radd al-Muhtār:³³²

And the preferred position is, that the possibility of foregoing the promise of punishment is for Muslims specifically, and not for the infidels.

One important thing to note here is, that the Ashārīs vociferously reject the implication of falsehood that the Māturīdīs say *khulf fi'l wayíd* necessitates. Ashārīs write elaborate proofs refuting that it necessitates falsehood. This clearly shows that they abhor the idea that falsehood is contingent. Otherwise, there was simply no need to refute the Māturīdī objection. All they had to say was, 'So what? We already believe that falsehood is only contingently impossible; your objection does not apply to us. Move on.' In fact, if one were to consider the statement of Jurjānī,³³³ as the Deobandis plaster it everywhere, it is not even contingently impossible. It is straightaway *mumkin*.

Al-Íyādhū Billāh.

³²³ *Sharḥ Áqāyid al-Áđudiyyah*, Jalāluddīn Dawwānī, Pg.102

³²⁴ that *khulf* necessitates falsehood. Notice that Jalal al-Dawwani is saying that falsehood is *muḥāl* and cannot be used to justify *khulf*; rather there be other justifications which he explains.

³²⁵ Promise of reward and Threat of punishment.

³²⁶ *targhīb*: to persuade to do good. to interest, attract and induce people towards doing good by promising the reward *tarhīb*: warning from doing evil and to keep away from it by threat of punishment.

³²⁷ *Dawwānī álā Ađudiyyah*, Pg.103

³²⁸ Álī ibn Aḥmed al-Wāhīdī, d.468AH; he was a scholar of *tafsīr* and Qur'ānic sciences; he has written tafsirs: *Al-Basīt*, *Al-Wajiz* and *Al-Wasīt*.

³²⁹ *khiyār*: to choose. that is He may choose to forego the promise of punishment as it is considered Grace and forgiveness.

³³⁰ *inshā*

³³¹ *khābar*

³³² *Radd al-Muhtār*, Vol.1,Pg.563

³³³ We shall, InshāAllāh deal with this statement in the next chapter: '*What Sharīf al-Jurjānī said*'

We can understand this better by another analogy; but first, let us restate the Deobandi argument:

- a) Some Ashārīs said that *khulf fi'l wa'yid* is possible.
- b) *Khulf fi'l wa'yid* necessitates falsehood.
- c) Therefore, some Ashārīs said that falsehood is possible.

This is a syllogistic fallacy known as the *quaternio terminorum* or the fallacy of four terms. The problem with the above is that the second statement was an objection by Māturīdīs. I will give a few more examples to illustrate this.

- a) Ḥanafīs accepted that *fatīḥah* can be omitted in prayer.
- b) Omitting *fatīḥah* necessitates invalidating *ṣalāt*.
- c) Therefore, Ḥanafīs accepted invalidating *ṣalāt*.

The problem in the above argument is, that the second statement is a Shāfiyī objection.

In another example, [Here, the second statement is actually a Ḥanafī objection]:

- a) Shāfiyīs accepted that after blood flows from a cut, one can pray [without renewing ablution].
- b) Flowing blood, from a cut breaks ablution.
- c) Therefore, Shāfiyīs accepted that one can pray after breaking ablution.

In a third example, [Here also, the second statement is actually a Ḥanafī objection]:

- a) Shāfiyīs said that funeral prayer without the bier is acceptable.
- b) Praying without the bier is invalid.
- c) Therefore, Shāfiyīs said invalid funeral prayer is acceptable.

I end this section with the verdict from Taftāzānī who ends his discussion on *khulf* in the following words:³³⁴

...as for those who said that forgiving [the *kafir*] is rationally possible; and falsehood in his promise of punishment – either [they said based on] the fact that falsehood is permissible when the objective is to do good,³³⁵ or that anything said about the future cannot be counted as falsehood.³³⁶ Along with the fact that there are explicit verses in which Allāh tāālā has informed us that He shall not forgive an infidel and that the infidel shall dwell in hell forever.

Then, the possibility of reneging on this promise [of punishment] and that it may not occur as informed, is hypothetical. When this is invalid,³³⁷ then it is known that falsehood in the information given by Allāh tāālā is not possible absolutely.

³³⁴ *Sharḥ al-Maqāsid*, Vol.5, Pg.155

³³⁵ the mutazilah position as he explains in a previous page that causes the conclusion: 'this kind of falsehood is absolutely good.'

³³⁶ the position of some Ashārīs

³³⁷ that forgiving a *kafir* can never happen – as informed by Allāh tāālā.

XII. WHAT SHARĪF AL-JURJĀNĪ SAID

In his commentary on *Al-Mawāqif*, Sharif Al-Jurjānī has said that falsehood is impossible for Allāh tāālā. By the ground rules (which he also explains elsewhere) of *kalām*, unless specified, it is *muḥāl dhātī* or essentially, intrinsically impossible. The original passage of *Al-Mawāqif*:³³⁸

A sub-section on the discussion of Speech: It is unanimously agreed that falsehood is impossible [in Allāh's Speech.] According to the Mutazilah, it is because of two reasons:

- a) That it is ugly and Allāh tāālā does not do ugly things; and this is based on their principle of rational ruling³³⁹
- b) It is against what is good [for the creation]. And that it is necessary for Allāh tāālā to do what is best for the creation. And we answer³⁴⁰ this by saying: 'It is not necessary for Allāh tāālā to do what is best [for the creation.]'

As for us, [the reasons why *kadhib*/falsehood is *muḥāl*]:

Firstly, because it is a flaw; and it is *muḥāl* for Allāh tāālā to have a flaw. Also, if this were true, then we would be more perfect at certain times than Him. Know, that I do not see any difference between a flaw in action and that, which is rationally ugly.³⁴¹ Because, the flaw in actions is in itself deemed rationally ugly – only these are two different descriptions.³⁴²

Secondly, if He were to be attributed with falsehood, then His falsehood would be pre-eternal – because nothing, that is an accident [*ḥādīth*] can be associated with Allāh tāālā. This would necessitate that truth is impossible for Allāh tāālā because, whatever is established as pre-eternal, its annihilation is impossible. Therefore, it is invalid.³⁴³ And we know by necessity, that one who knows something, it is possible that they can give the information that is conforming to the actual occurrence.³⁴⁴ [Therefore] this argument only proves the truth in *kalām nafsī* but not in that³⁴⁵ which is denotive of *kalām nafsī*.³⁴⁶

³³⁸ *Al-Mawāqif*, Pg.295 Mawqif al-Khāmis;Marṣad ar-Rābiy;Maṣṣad al-Sābiy

³³⁹ Which makes something beautiful or ugly rationally.

³⁴⁰ This is another dispute with the Mutazilah – *wujūb al-aṣḥān* – who say that it is necessary for Allāh tāālā to do what is good for us. We reject it and say that He is the Lord and Creator – who does what He Wills; it is NOT 'necessary' for Him to do what is good for us.

³⁴¹ *naqṣ fi'l fiyāl / qubḥ al-āqāl*

³⁴² That is, it is only a semantic difference. one should not hastily conclude by their own take on this sentence. This is in itself an elaborate discussion and to touch upon it is beyond the scope of this paper.

³⁴³ *lāzim*, that which necessitates that truth is impossible is invalid.

³⁴⁴ That is, it is possible to tell the truth some time, so *ṣidq* is not *muḥāl*; he is proving that truth is not impossible.

³⁴⁵ As it is in Jurjani's commentary: 'that which describes the Eternal Speech'

³⁴⁶ Notice that he presents a proof in his dialectical argument and also says that this proof only proves truth in *kalām nafsī* and is not adequate to prove truth in *kalām lafẓī*. This does not mean, however that there can be falsehood in *kalām lafẓī*.

Thirdly, [and upon which is reliance] the information given by the Prophet *ṣallīAllāhu ʿalayhi wa ṣallam* – and this is known [the knowledge is among] necessities of religion. If one objects: ‘after all, the Prophets being true is known by the truth (in Allāh’s speech) and if you say it is impossible for falsehood in Allāh’s speech (by the Prophet’s information) then it causes a circular argument. We say: ‘The Prophet’s veracity is known by miracles.’

Notice, that Al-Ijī is not considering falsehood as possible anywhere. He has categorically stated that it is *muḥāl*. The argument however is about the proof – and how valid it is. Sharīf al-Jurjānī comments this at length, posits dialectical arguments, and even wonders at one stage: ‘How will our companions (the Ashārīs) be able to ward off the accusation of falsehood, if this be the case?’ This clearly indicates that nobody disputes falsehood as *muḥāl*. The whole discussion is about **how** to prove it *muḥāl*. The following is the commentary of Sharīf Al-Jurjānī:³⁴⁷

{and the answer is: it is not obligatory for Him to do what is best for us} because basically, nothing is obligatory for Him – He is absolutely free and exalted from all such things.³⁴⁸ **{As for}** falsehood being impossible³⁴⁹ for Him **{we have three proofs for it. The first is that falsehood is a flaw, and a flaw for Allāh táālā is muḥāl}** by *ijmāʿ*, by unanimous agreement.

{Also, because, it necessitates} that is, if falsehood occurs in His speech **{it will be that}** we **{are more perfect than Him at certain times}** meaning: when we are truthful in our speech. This argument proves that *kalām nafsi* which is pre-eternal is truthful.

Otherwise, it will necessitate that there is a flaw in the Attribute of Allāh táālā and at the same time, perfection in our attributes. This does not lead to truth in letters and words that He creates, in the bodies that are indicative of intended meaning. Therefore, when someone says that ‘He created a liar’ is also a flaw in His Actions; and that which he is warning against comes back **{as the position}** itself.

To ward this off, he says: **{Know, that I do not see any difference between flaw in action and that which is rationally ugly. Because, the flaw in actions is itself deemed rationally ugly}** in it. **{only these are two different descriptions}** So how will our companions who reject [the concept of] ‘rationally ugly’ defend against falsehood in *kalām lafẓī* by implicating flaw in the Actions of Allāh táālā?

{Secondly, if He were to be attributed with falsehood, then His falsehood would be pre-eternal – because nothing, that is an accident, can be associated with Allāh táālā. This would entail that truth is impossible for Allāh táālā} juxtaposed with such falsehood.

³⁴⁷ *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, Vol.8, 114 onwards. *Mawqif al-Khāmīs; Maṣḍar ar-Rābiy; Maṣḍar al-Sābiy: fī annahu táālā Mutakallim*.

Bold text in flower brackets is by Al-Ijī; running text by Sharīf al-Jurjānī; comments in square brackets meant to clarify the translation inserted by the author of this paper.

³⁴⁸ obligations

³⁴⁹ *imtināʿ al-kadhib*: impossibility, *kadhib* being *muḥāl*

Otherwise, that would entail that such falsehood would extinguish, which would be *muḥāl*³⁵⁰ {because whatever is established as pre-eternal, its annihilation is impossible.}

That entails truth is impossible for Him³⁵¹ and this entailing thing {is invalid because we know by necessity that whosoever knows something, it is possible} for him {to give information corresponding to the actual event and this} second facet is also invalid.³⁵² {Verily this proves that Divine Speech³⁵³ is Truth} because it is pre-eternal. As for these descriptions³⁵⁴ that denote [the meaning] of Divine Speech {it does not} provide evidence for its being truthful³⁵⁵ because it is not pre-eternal;³⁵⁶ so, it is possible to abate by the [effect] of generation of truth, which is opposed to it.³⁵⁷ This, along with the fact that, it is important for us to prove its truthfulness.³⁵⁸

{Thirdly, and upon which is reliance} on its veracity and the proof of truthfulness in *kalām nafsī* and *kalām lafẓī* together {the information given to us by the Prophet *ṣallī Allāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*} that He is Truthful in All His Speech. {And this} that is, the information given by the Prophet [*salutations upon him and blessings*] on the Truthfulness of Allāh {is something that is among necessities³⁵⁹ of religion} describing proofs for this [statement] is not necessary. And its³⁶⁰ veracity itself; and not just to prove that one information³⁶¹ true. Rather we say: it is reported by all³⁶² prophets – Allāh’s blessings

³⁵⁰ Notice that here too Jurjānī is not making a statement but assuming the premise already. That is:

1. If *kadhīb* is an attribute, then it is pre-eternal
2. Which would require *ṣidq* to be impossible
3. Otherwise, *kadhīb* would be annihilated which would be *muḥāl* (because annihilation of all pre-eternal attributes is *muḥāl*)

Jurjānī is not making a statement that ‘absence of *kadhīb* is *muḥāl*’. Al-ʿiyādhu Billāh. Understand this, May Allāh guide you.

³⁵¹ *imtināʾ al-ṣidq*

³⁵² That is proposition that falsehood is pre-eternal.

³⁵³ *kalām nafsī*

³⁵⁴ Which is termed as *kalām lafẓī*

³⁵⁵ Notice again, that here the discussion is about the quality of evidence: whether it is sufficient to prove both *kalām nafsī* and *lafẓī* truthful; or just one.

³⁵⁶ *ḥādīth*; I have translated it as not pre-eternal.

³⁵⁷ Continuing from the previous proposition that ‘supposing falsehood is pre-eternal, truth becomes accident’

³⁵⁸ Siyālkūtī clarifies thusly: [Along with the fact that it is important for us to prove its truthfulness] because the veracity and feasibility of worldly and religious affairs rest upon it; and there is no way to reach Divine Speech (*kalām nafsī*) except through these words and descriptions that denote *kalām nafsī*. And one of the requirements for these (words and descriptions, i.e., *kalām lafẓī*) to be indicative of Divine Speech (*kalām nafsī*) is that there should not be any falsehood in it also (just like there is no falsehood in *kalām nafsī*). Because, if there is falsehood in it (*kalām lafẓī*), this prevents it to be denotive of *kalām nafsī*.

This [proof by Al-Jurjānī above] needs examination. Because words and descriptions which are indicative with respect to *kalām nafsī* and its truthfulness is established by the above proof; induces a corollary that falsehood in *kalām lafẓī* is also impossible, *muḥāl* as is obvious. To base the conclusion of falsehood being impossible because it is denotive of [Divine Speech] causes a circular argument. Our scholars said: Because, *kalām lafẓī* is denotive of the **meaning** of Divine Speech – which is Pre-Eternal and Attribute of Allāh tāālā; [the meaning] which is according to the actual occurrence after it was established – this according to them is the proof that falsehood is impossible in *kalām lafẓī*. Ponder.

³⁵⁹ To know and to believe.

³⁶⁰ That is veracity of religion itself depends on the fundamental principle that the word of Allāh tāālā is Truthful

³⁶¹ That is, information of the Prophet is truthful.

³⁶² *Tawātur* – is used here to mean without exception.

upon them – that Allāh táālā is Truthful, just as it has been reported by all of them that He Speaks [with His Divine Attribute of Speech].

{If one objects:} the truth of the prophet is known by the attestation of his truth by Allāh táālā **{and this is proof of his attestation}** for the Prophet **{of his truth}** that is, truth of the Prophet [is possible only] **{when it is impossible for Him}** Exalted is He **{to be free from falsehood}**. This necessitates that His Speech is Truthful; because the Prophet's being truthful, is known only by the Truth of Allāh táālā **{and this is a circular argument}** if you attest for the truth of Allāh táālā relying upon the truth of the Prophet, as you do.³⁶³ **{We say: testimony to the Prophet's truth is in miracles}** as it has been discussed earlier.

Notice that Al-Jurjānī clarifies that it is impossible for falsehood in both *kalām nafsī* and *kalām lafẓī*, but still those who fancy their nafs and desire insist otherwise. Al-Íyādhu Billāh.

I was in the process of making a final review, when a brother brought to my notice, a link where an irreligious person writes, hell-bent on proving the Deobandi aberration right. His newest attempt is putting words in Al-Íjī's mouth.³⁶⁴

The person translates from *Al-Mawāqif*, omitting the commentary but still adds his own take:³⁶⁵

The last point refutes the argument that this is circular as the Prophet's own vindication is through his miracles so his confirmation of the words of revelation, i.e. the uttered-speech, affirm their truthfulness according to al-Iji. Thus, al-Iji denies the "rational impossibility" of falsehood in the uttered-speech, but affirms its contingent impossibility.

Just in case, someone misunderstands, the above passage was translated by a *kadh'dhābī* and I am citing it here. It is not mine, Al-ĥamdulillāh.

Where did Al-Íjī say that it was a **'contingent impossibility'**? We have seen earlier that unless categorically stated and explicitly qualified, the *muĥāl* mentioned by úlamā of *kalām* is *muĥāl dhātī*. And Al-Íjī only said that it was *muĥāl*; so it is *muĥāl dhātī*, **intrinsic impossibility**.

Moreover, the person does not seem to understand that the two kinds of impossibility in *kalām* terminology are: contingent and intrinsic; not contingent and rational. Anyone reading the Arabic text can easily see the tense and that Al-Íjī is only commenting that, the evidence being examined is not adequate to prove falsehood emphatically. By shifting the emphasis, he is trying to give a new meaning to the text.

It is thus, by twisting and giving fancy interpretations to obscure statements in books of *kalām*, these deviants try to prove their point. May Allāh táālā vouchsafe us all from such *fitnah* and destroy the *fitnah* of liars and slanderers.

Al-Íyādhu Billāh!

³⁶³ those who bring *taṣdīq* of nabīy as proof for the Truthfulness of Allāh táālā.

³⁶⁴ This was on the 3rd June 2010.

³⁶⁵ A screenshot of the full comment is included in Appendix F

XIII. CONCLUSION

The specialist and the layman alike should have understood the issue by now and learnt that there cannot be any difference of opinion in this subject at all. The ‘difference’ is carved out by some people, solely to exonerate the erring *mullā*. Summaries have been provided throughout, and here we sum up the issue once again following the example of our elders. For instance, in *Al-Musāyarah*, after detailed arguments, Imām Kamāl ibn Humām says:³⁶⁶

{Conclusion} [of the book/our discussion]: An explanation of the *áqīdah* of Ahl as-Sunnah wa'l Jamāáh.

The author, may Allāh have mercy upon him said: {And we conclude} this {book with an explanation of the beliefs of Ahl as-Sunnah wa'l Jamāáh;} so that we mention in summary the major points that have been explained in detail earlier; because a concise summary after a detailed exposition in various places gives more clarity and explains the objectives more clearly because of their contiguousness and being in one place [is also] easy to refer; and that is: the creed of *Ahl as-Sunnah*.

It is as if the Imāms are saying: ‘The book was a discussion which also included statements from heretics and *mulhidin* which were also refuted where they appeared. However, here in the conclusion, we state our belief in case you have misunderstood or mixed up any quotes earlier’.

1. Allāh táālā is free from all flaws. It is *muḥāl* – intrinsically impossible – for Allāh táālā to have any flaws.
2. The entire *ummah* is in unanimous agreement that it is *muḥāl* for Allāh táālā to have a flaw.
3. It is a fundamental principle – of *tanzīh* – that one should believe that flaw is *muḥāl* for Allāh táālā.
4. *Kadhib* – falsehood – is a flaw.
5. Therefore, it is *muḥāl* for Allāh táālā to have falsehood in His Speech.
6. We have seen that falsehood is not an action or a thing but rather, an attribute of speech. Thus, any property of falsehood is relayed to the attribute it is associated with and vice versa.
7. Falsehood is either pre-eternal or an accident. If it is a property of the Attribute of Speech, then it is pre-eternal. And that which is pre-eternal is only *wājib*. Thus falsehood becomes *wājib* and ceases to be *mumkin* anymore.
8. This entails that if anyone says that falsehood is not included in Divine Speech, he becomes a kafir; because, he denies an attribute that is *wājib* for Allāh táālā.
9. If falsehood in Divine Speech is possible, then its opposite is *muḥāl*. That is, truth becomes *muḥāl* for Allāh táālā, which is absurd.
10. In addition, that which is pre-eternal cannot be annihilated; which means, that falsehood abides in the attributes of Allāh táālā. Exalted is He from such obnoxious things.
11. No scholar said that it is possible (*mumkin*) for falsehood to be included in Divine Power.³⁶⁷

³⁶⁶ The running inline commentary of *Al-Musāyarah* by his student Ibn Abi'sh Sharif is in blue text.

³⁶⁷ This is the Mútazilah standpoint, that it is included in *mumkināt*. See Ábd al-Qāhir's *Al-Milal wa'n Niḥal*, Pg.137-139

12. All Sunni scholars have said that it is *muḥāl*. And the *muḥāl* mentioned is *muḥāl dhātī*, unless specified otherwise. That is, it is intrinsically, essentially, absolutely impossible for falsehood to exist in the Speech of Allāh tāālā.
13. Certain statements in *kalām* books are quoted by heretics to prove their false belief. These statements are either cited out of context or poorly worded or should be simply rejected. One cannot abandon reason and the majority opinion for the sake of a mistake in a *kalām* book. Moreover, one does not learn *áqīdah* from books of *kalām*.
14. Sharīf Jurjānī is quoted that he said ‘*mumkin.*’ This is one ambiguous sentence mentioned in a different issue. Indeed, he has written pages upon pages proving it *muḥāl* earlier under the discussion of Speech, where it is relevant. A judicious person should abandon that which is pithy, confusing and unclear for that which is lucid and explained in detail.
15. One should not try to look for *áqīdah* in books of *kalām* because a misunderstanding (like this) can lead someone to heresy. This is why *úlamā* warned against *kalām*; Al-Qārī citing the Ḥanafī Imām, Abū Yūsuf that he said:
 He who seeks knowledge by way of *kalām* will fall into heresy³⁶⁸
 ...It is therefore, Ibn Rushd, the grandson and the author of *Tahāfut at-Tahāfut* said – and he was among the most knowledgeable about philosophy: ‘The result of [indulging in] *kalām* and argument causes one to be perplexed in the present state, heresy and doubt [or scepticism] in the end.’³⁶⁹
16. The issue of *khulf fi’l wa’yīd* is entirely different and has nothing to do with the issue of falsehood; some scholars considered that *khulf fi’l wa’yīd* is possible and that it is not *muḥāl*.
17. Indeed, those who deem *khulf fi’l wa’yīd* possible vociferously refute and reject the objection that it necessitates falsehood. From this, it is known that they rejected falsehood and rationalized *khulf* by other means and repeatedly asserted that ‘this is not falsehood’.

Every person should take care of his own faith and should not be fooled by the devil and follow erring scholars. Imām Sanūsī says:³⁷⁰

I have endeavored to make this a concise guide without saying a even a little bit more [than necessary], eager to maintain the brevity of the text for common benefit. In spite of knowing that, for many in our time, truth weighs in heavy upon their hearts – yet, they are very attentive in listening to the adorned and deceptive words of the devil.

Thus, the devil hijacks them from the path of salvation and to such folk, he makes it appear as if they are in a perfect condition concerning true belief [*áqāyīd*]. And their crime – even if they have become famous because of it, even if that crime is on account of blind following – the devil makes it appear to them as accomplished gnosis. The devil fixes this deception in their hearts and drives them to hear similar [whisperings] from his aides – evil scholars and ignorant sufis.

We seek Allāh’s refuge from evil and beseech Him to guide us on the right path.

³⁶⁸ *Sharḥ Fiqh al-Akbar*, Pg.6 : One who seeks knowledge by way of *kalām* will fall into *zandaqah*, or become a *zindīq*. Like the *zindīq* who tried to justify Deobandis and fell to asking whether it was intrinsically impossible for Allāh tāālā to have a flaw.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid* Pg.10

³⁷⁰ *Sharḥ Sanūsī álá Al-Wustā*, Pg.20

Appendix A

KELLER'S TALK

In an audio clip supposed to be the voice of Nuh Keller, he can be heard saying³⁷¹:

Assalam alaykum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh. Alhamdulillah, [erm] it seems like you are listening to the *shaytan* a bit here. Is it possible for Allah to lie? This is not intrinsically impossible but only contingently impossible.

All you have to know, Sidi, is that it's impossible. That's sufficient for you. [er..] And, as for the, [er..] it's not a genuine *aqida* issue. You don't have to know whether it's intrinsically impossible or contingently impossible; but you only have to know that it's impossible. So, that's the only thing that you have to know about it. As for the, [er..] major *ulama* that have said that it's intrinsically impossible, not, and contingently impossible and not intrinsically impossible, as I have; [er..] you can find the same thing with *Jurjani* in his *Sharh of the Mawaqif* with *Iji*.

If you know something about the advanced books of, [er..] *aqida*, [er..] you know very well who these are; and so if there's anything to argue about, it's in the top *ulama* in the field and not just *Shaykh Nuh*. And, so, all you have to know is that Allah does not lie and it is not possible for Allah to lie and this is contingently impossible.

And, if someone were to say: no, it's intrinsically impossible, I would not consider him a *kafir* or a *fasiq* or anything else but really someone with a different impression than mine and different and...so, the *Qur'an* is *haqq*. Allah does not lie, does not lie, but, and for more details and that, you just have to ask someone that has time to waste and has this, [er..] time on his hands to devote to meaningless questions.

And nobody busies himself with useless doings but someone who is useless. And, so, try to not be useless yourself, and turn to Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala*, and, [er..] *inshaAllah ta'ala*, Allah will illumine[.ate?] your heart with *dhikr* and with *ta'ah* and not with arguments. That's the least of your effective way to reach Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala*.

Wa billahit tawfiq. Assalam alaykum wa rahmatullah wa barakatuh.

Analysing all the implications of this talk is a waste of time. Unfortunately, if this kind of careless talk is left unattended, it slowly becomes an accepted position. Therefore, it is necessary to point out major errors in this short speech.

Allāh tāālā gives guidance.

³⁷¹ Many thanks to a brother who kindly consented to transcribe the above from the audio found on the Internet.

1. It seems like you are listening to the shaytan a bit here.

This kind of ‘Sufism’ is simply being evasive when one doesn’t know the answer or if one is on thin ice and has no proofs for their own shaky position. It is an obligation – *fard* – to investigate genuine *‘aqidah* and *wajib* for one who knows to explain it, instead of using emotional blackmail.

True, shaytan whispers in ears of people of false *‘aqidah*; whispers like *‘falsehood is only contingently impossible and not intrinsically impossible.’* It is the duty of a scholar to clarify and eliminate this kind of satanic whispering instead of merely criticising someone with a genuine query.

Perhaps, it was the devil whispering in the ear of Ismayil Dihlawi, who first proposed this *‘aqidah*.³⁷² Ironically, Keller chooses to side with the whispering of the devil instead of refuting it.

2. Is it possible for Allah to lie? This is not intrinsically impossible but only contingently impossible.

We have seen earlier in this paper that it is intrinsically impossible – *muḥāl dhātī* – for Allāh táālā to lie. The same can be found in numerous books of *‘Aqidah*, *Kalām* and *Tafsīr*; and a sample has been listed in this paper already. Alahazrat Imām Aḥmed Ridā Khan has written extensively on this subject, and one of his books *Sub’ḥān as-Subbūh*, is a 140 page treatise which quotes and explains proofs from classical books and *‘ulamā* establishing the fundamental Islamic belief, that falsehood is *muḥāl dhātī* for Allāh táālā.

3. It’s not a genuine *‘aqidah* issue.

It is related to the fundamental principle upon which everything we believe as Muslims depends upon; dismissing it summarily as not being a genuine *‘aqidah* issue indicates, either abject ignorance of *‘aqidah* or the implications of such a corrupt idea. Alahazrat says in his *Sub’ḥān as-Subbūh*:

Glory be to Allāh! If we consider falsehood as a possibility for Allāh táālā, then Islam will be beleaguered with such accusations and criticism that it will become impossible to refute them all. Atheists will raise such objections and put forth arguments that cannot be answered [alongside this odious belief].

The evidence of the Qur’ān will become completely unusable. Judgement day, life after death, reckoning on that day of Judgement, heaven, hell, reward, punishment everything becomes questionable.

Because, after all, our belief in these things is because Allāh táālā has informed us; and if falsehood is a possibility in His speech (and thus information), then rationally, a possibility of untruth exists in every information.

Perhaps, He might have said it just like that;³⁷³ perhaps it might not come true. Glory to Him and Exalted is He from what they³⁷⁴ attribute Him; there is no power, or strength except that granted by Allāh, the Exalted, the Greatest.³⁷⁵

³⁷² In the subcontinent. That is, he revived the forgotten and dead Mútaẓilī belief.

³⁷³ That is, without its being truth.

³⁷⁴ Heretics, apostates.

³⁷⁵ Sub’ḥānahu wa táālā ámmā yaşifūn; wa lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billah.

This refutation can be restated thus:

- a) *Mumkin* is that which can exist or not-exist.
- b) When something is categorized as *mumkin*, then one cannot claim that it can never exist, nor that it has ever existed by merely applying [one's] thought.
- c) Because this is related to Divine Will (and Divine Knowledge); that is, to bring a certain thing into existence or not.
- d) Divine Will is an unknown, unless Allāh táālā Himself reveals it.

The claim of heretics that, 'Allāh has never lied, nor shall He lie; even though falsehood is *mumkin*' becomes absurd because:

- a) If falsehood is *mumkin*
- b) No one can claim that falsehood can never exist [because only *muḥāl* is known that it shall never exist]
- c) Because this is related to Divine Will (that He Will never say an untruth).
- d) Divine Will is an unknown until He reveals it Himself.

The clincher is:

- e) Has He told us of His Divine Will?
- f) And if He has told us of His Will Himself, then has He really said the truth?
- g) Because, if falsehood is deemed a possibility, it is quite possible that he has told a falsehood (*al-íyādhu billāh*) that 'He will not lie.'

This is why it is necessary to believe that falsehood is *muḥāl* and NOT *mumkin*. Alahazrat quotes Imām Rāzī in this regard in the commentary of the verse: **'The Words of your Lord have been completed with Truth and Justice'**³⁷⁶ who provides rational proof³⁷⁷ that falsehood is impossible for Allāh táālā and says:

It is not permitted to bring evidence that falsehood is impossible for Allāh táālā from revealed³⁷⁸ proofs. Because the very basis for the validity of revealed proofs is dependent on the [fundamental] premise, that falsehood is impossible [*muḥāl*] for Allāh táālā. If we attest for the impossibility of falsehood by revealed proofs, it would cause a circular argument³⁷⁹ and thus [render it] invalid.

4. You don't have to know whether it's intrinsically impossible or contingently impossible; but you only have to know that it's impossible.

We have seen earlier from primary *áqīdah* texts, that it is obligatory for every Muslim to learn what is possible and impossible for Allāh táālā and His Messengers. True, an ordinary Muslim cannot learn everything found in books of *áqīdah*; but when a doubt on any such thing is raised, it is necessary for them to get it right by asking a scholar and getting the doubt clarified.

³⁷⁶ Tafsīr Kabīr, Sūrah Al-Anáám, Verse.115.

³⁷⁷ *dalīl áqlī*

³⁷⁸ *dalāyil al-sam'iyah*

³⁷⁹ *lazima'd dawr*

The other issue, is that a Mufti who does not understand his times (or the context) is an ignoramus. When people without proper knowledge of *áqīdah* are floating around the heretical idea that ‘falsehood is only contingently impossible’, one should clarify it, instead of burying one’s head in the sand and advising others to ignore it. Nevertheless, Keller ignores his own advice after a short while when he says:

And, so, all you have to know is that Allah does not lie and it is not possible for Allah to lie and this is contingently impossible³⁸⁰.

Suppose Keller had left it without qualifying³⁸¹ the ‘impossible’, a ‘useless’ person would have come to the right conclusion after investigation that, when *muḥāl*/impossible is mentioned without qualification, it is *muḥāl dhātī*; intrinsically and essentially impossible.

It is reminiscent of a quote: ‘Paint the cars any color as long as it is black’. And here, Keller is saying: ‘You are not required to know if it is intrinsically or contingently impossible; just that it is impossible and this is only contingently impossible.’ Go figure.

5. Major ulama that have said that it’s intrinsically impossible... not... and contingently impossible and not intrinsically impossible, as I have; you can find the same thing with Jurjani in his Sharh of the Mawaqif with Eeji.

Where did ‘major’ *úlamā* say this? Can he provide proof by citations instead of the fallacious reasoning³⁸² proffered by other Deobandi apologists? Where did Jurjani say it in his *Sharḥ of Al-Mawāqif*?

We have already seen what is said in *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, that *kadhib*/falsehood is *muḥāl* by unanimous agreement of the ummah. It is also in the same book that *muḥāl áradī* or *wājib áradī* are actually, *mumkin* which has been transformed to *muḥāl* or *wājib* on account of an extrinsic condition. And note that anything described as *muḥāl* without qualification is *muḥāl dhātī*: meaning intrinsically, essentially impossible. If anyone claims that, it is *muḥāl áradī* or contingently impossible, they must provide proof, and they should start with the definitions. The only way a man can absolve himself of such blame is by providing proof for his claim. Sure, one can keep quiet and extol the virtues of silence, but on the Day of Judgement, evasion will not be an option.

6. If you know something about the advanced books of ... aqida... you know very well who these are;

The advanced books of *kalām*, whether *Musāyarah*, its *Sharḥ Musāmarah* or *Sharḥ al-Maqāsid* or various books of Imām Rāzī or the *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif* or the half a dozen books of Imām Sanūsī on *kalām* and the various commentaries, all refute the belief Keller proposes in this talk. Yet, Keller insists otherwise. This could be due to either genuine ignorance, or a deliberate intention to pervert the truth. I am restraining myself from suggesting the third possibility of falsehood, as Keller’s followers and admirers may take offence.³⁸³

Let him list ‘these’ statements and translate ‘these,’ as he is a well known translator. If he has no time, let him at least mention these ‘advanced books’.

³⁸⁰ These are Keller’s own words. See the talk above.

³⁸¹ As he qualifies the impossible: ‘only contingently impossible’

³⁸² If he is referring to an apparently ambiguous statement – just one confusing line – see Appendix C for a detailed analysis. Still, we would like to see where Sharif al-Jurjānī has said that it is ‘contingently impossible.’

³⁸³ Indeed, suggesting the possibility of falsehood in Allāh’s speech is faith, and in that of Keller is ‘bad adab’? SubḥānAllāh! If you are still unmoved, you may want to weep at the hardness of your heart and the expanse of your ignorance. May Allāh táālā guide you.

7. And so if there's anything to argue about, it's in the top ulama in the field and not just Shaykh Nuh.

Related to 6 above. He states a false premise that 'top ulama in the field' have this *áqīdah*, and derives the fallacious conclusion that Nuh is with them. The truth of the matter is, none of the top *úlamā* have this *áqīdah* and it is only with Nuh. However, if Nuh Keller is referring to the Deobandis, it is another matter. The first group³⁸⁴ of wayward scholars to innovate this *áqīdah* was that of Deobandis and their elders and Keller is blindly following them.

8. And, so, all you have to know is that Allah does not lie and it is not possible for Allah to lie and this is contingently impossible.

Keller has proven that he cannot be relied upon for citations; here, he also fumbles with derivations. Alahazrat demolished this mendacious idea in such words³⁸⁵:

I say, with the guidance of Allāh: The definition of **possible** is that, which is equivalent in relation to existence and non-existence;³⁸⁶ anything the intellect considers possible, the intellect cannot rule out the possibility of its existence, no matter how far-fetched and incredible such a thing might be; because, every possible thing [*mumkin*] is included in Divine Power [*maqdūr*]; and everything governed by the Divine Power is related to Divine Will [*irādah*].

And the Divine Will is an unknown,³⁸⁷ and beyond the intellect [to know it]. Then how can one claim [on the basis of intellect] that: 'even though falsehood is included in Divine Power, I have knowledge of His Will; and thus, He has never spoken a lie nor will He ever tell a lie from the pre-eternity to eternity.' One can talk of Divine Will only when, He who Wills, reveals it Himself, that He will never do something, like He has Himself said:³⁸⁸

**And Allāh shall never burden a soul more than its capacity. And He has said:³⁸⁹
He wishes ease for you; and He wishes not hardship upon you.**

Also, see point 4 for Keller pushing his own agenda and being holier-than-thou at the same time.

9. And, if someone were to say: no, it's intrinsically impossible, I would not consider him a kafir or a fasiq or anything else but really someone with a different impression than mine and different and...

On the contrary, one who does not believe that falsehood is intrinsically impossible is at best a *mubtadiy* – heretic and wayward; and at worst, a *kafir* (*al-iyādhullāh*). Keller is trying to trivialize the issue simply because he does not understand the issue himself, nor is acquainted with *kalām* terminology, which is obvious from this talk and his screed³⁹⁰ elsewhere.

³⁸⁴ Indeed, this is an old controversy. But everyone knew that it is an ancient Mútaẓilī belief. No one who claimed to be a Sunni ever said this.

³⁸⁵ *Sub'ḥān as-Subbūh*

³⁸⁶ that is, it anything that can be existent or non-existent is considered as *mumkin*, by the very definition.

³⁸⁷ *ghayb*

³⁸⁸ Qur'ān 2:286

³⁸⁹ Qur'ān 2:185

³⁹⁰ *Iman, Kufr and Takfir* – which has been refuted elsewhere.

10. So, the Qur'an is haqq. Allah does not lie, does not lie, but, and

The above is a correct belief. But the requirement for this correct belief is that falsehood is absolutely, and intrinsically impossible for Allāh táālā. See point 8 above.

11. For more details and that, you just have to ask someone that has time to waste and has this time on his hands to devote to meaningless questions.

This is an attempt to pre-empt any refutation to this meaningless talk; and tinged with context-blindness about the history of the issue. Muslims were not bothered with this meaningless question and a person with a lot of time to waste concocted it; and his followers promoted it – and some others are defending this in our age.

If one tries to correct this false idea, then they are wasting their time. If Keller were sincere in 'not wasting time', he would have abstained completely from making any comments on this issue. If someone meddles in things which they have no knowledge of, or even circulate utter lies, they are being useful; but, if someone refutes that false idea, they are useless. Arrogance and *újb* are the sufi's bane.

12. And nobody busies himself with useless doings but someone who is useless.

When fitna rears its head, and false, heretical beliefs are sneaked into Islam, it is an obligation for every Muslim who knows, to fight it. This is what our salaf, our elders did. This is what the imams, Al-Ashārī, Al-Maturidi, Ghazzali, Rāzī, Subki and Sanūsī did. Perhaps they were being useless as well.

13. And, so, try to not be useless yourself, and turn to Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala, inshaAllah ta'ala, Allah will illumine your heart with dhikr and with ta'ah and not with arguments. That's the least of your effective way to reach Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala.

The first step in *sulūk* is to investigate and profess correct *áqidah*. This is a part of *dhikr* itself. Some sufis, who have not properly understood the objectives of *sharīah*, foolishly think that *dhikr* is only litanies. Aḥmed Ibn Áṭṭayillāh as-Sakandarī, the spokesman of the sufis, and a Shadhili imām says in the opening lines of *Miftāḥ al-Falāḥ*:³⁹¹

Dhikr or Remembrance means liberation from negligence and forgetfulness. And this is achieved by having an attentive and a mindful heart in the presence of Allāh táālā. It is also said: 'that you seek the name of the remembered one, by the heart and by the tongue.' It is the same whether you remember [do dhikr of] Allāh táālā or any of His Attributes; or any of His commandments; or any of His Divine Actions; or establish evidence³⁹² that guides you towards them;³⁹³ or Prayer;³⁹⁴

Or remembering any of His Messengers, His Prophets or His Friends³⁹⁵ or anyone related to them; or anyone who tries to come closer to the Lord by any means.³⁹⁶

³⁹¹ *Miftāḥ al-Falāḥ wa Miṣbāḥ al-Arwāḥ fī Dhikrillāhi'l Karīm al-Fattāḥ*, on Dhikr/Remembrance of the Lord Almighty. By Imām Aḥmed Ibn Áṭṭayillāh as-Sakandarī.

³⁹² for example to prove that the Attributes of Allāh táālā are all transcendent from all flaws; including flaws like falsehood and

³⁹³ that is anything that provides evidence to Attributes, Actions and Commandments of the Lord

³⁹⁴ *duā*

³⁹⁵ *Awliyā'a*

Or any action [that bring you closer to the Lord Almighty] like reciting the Qur'ān, litanies,³⁹⁷ poetry,³⁹⁸ singing/recitation,³⁹⁹ or attending a lecture⁴⁰⁰ or retelling of stories.⁴⁰¹

So, the Mutakallim⁴⁰² is a *dhākir*;⁴⁰³ the Mutafaqqih⁴⁰⁴ is a *dhākir*; the teacher is a *dhākir*; the Mufti is a *dhākir*; the preacher is *dhākir*; the thinker⁴⁰⁵ who marvels at the Greatness of Allāh and His Glory, His Power, His Signs, the heavens and the earth is a *dhākir*; one obeys the commands of Allāh and abstains from His Prohibitions is a *dhākir*.

Imām Ghazzālī writes, in the discussion on the superiority of ascetism and abstaining from company:⁴⁰⁶

... That is, he should seek Allāh tāālā by this knowledge; the knowledge about Him, His Attributes, His Actions – because knowledge of these is far superior than every good deed [*āmā*]. Rather, the very objective of good deeds is to remove one's heart from the creation and be solely focused on the gnosis and love of the Almighty.

Both deeds and knowledge about deeds, are meant to attain this knowledge.⁴⁰⁷ And this [secondary] knowledge is the destination of the seekers⁴⁰⁸ in this path and as if it is a condition⁴⁰⁹ on this path.

Al-Sanūsī explaining the importance of refuting heresies⁴¹⁰:

It is reported that Master Abū Is'hāq al-Isfarāyīni *radīyAllāhu ānhū* during the time when heretical ideas were intensely debated [and heresies were rising] went up the mountain, Mount Lebanon, a place of seclusion and worship, and which was the dwelling of friends of Allāh [Awliyā'Allāh].

³⁹⁶ Obviously as advised by the Sharīah or is compliant with it.

³⁹⁷ Dhikr here, is used as litany.

³⁹⁸ Permitted by the *sharīah* and that which is in praise of Allāh, His Messengers, His Friends or imparting wisdom; In general, Islamic poetry.

³⁹⁹ *Ghinā* here means vocal singing of permitted poetry. Like the *Burdah* for example and odes in praise of the Prophet ṣallAllāhu ālayhi wa sallam.

⁴⁰⁰ Obviously, Islamic lectures.

⁴⁰¹ True stories from the lives of Prophets, Awliyā'a and other righteous Muslims. As the Lord Almighty has said: 'Verily, in their stories, there are lessons for people of understanding.' [Sūrah Yūsuf, 12:111].

⁴⁰² A scholar or student of Kalām, when it is meant to establish evidence for the Attributes of Allāh; to refute false ideas and to remove heretical ideas being planted in the minds of common muslims.

⁴⁰³ One who is busy remembering his Lord.

⁴⁰⁴ **Mutafaqqih**: one who is learning fiqh. The scholar or student of Jurisprudence. When one becomes a master of this science, he is termed a **Faqīh**. The master of jurisprudence, fiqh.

⁴⁰⁵ **Mutafakkir fī āzamatillāh**: One who spends time observing, thinking about the creation and marveling at the Greatness and the Immense Wisdom of the Creator.

⁴⁰⁶ *Iḥyā'a ulūm al-Din*, The Second Part, The Sixth Book: On the Merits of Shunning Company. Vol.2/Pg.376

⁴⁰⁷ Of Attributes of Allāh tāālā, His Divine Actions.

⁴⁰⁸ *ghāyatu'l murīdīn*

⁴⁰⁹ That is, a condition to reach the goal is true knowledge about the Attributes of Allāh tāālā.

⁴¹⁰ *Sharḥ Sanūsī ālā Al-Kubrā*, Pg.20

He found them withdrawn from common people and busy in the worship of Allāh tāālā and he said :

'O people who live by eating grass!⁴¹¹ You have fled [to seclusion] here, and forsaken the followers of Prophets *ṣallAllāhu alayhi wa sallam* [vulnerable] in the hands of heretics?'

They replied: 'Master! We do not have the strength to live among people; but Allāh tāālā has given you strength and you are capable to [repel them]'

The teacher *radīyAllāhu anhu* returned and busied himself with refuting heretics and wrote his book, *Al-Jāmi' Bayna'l Jalī wa'l Khafī*.⁴¹²

It is said that Master Abū Bakr ibn Al-Fūrak spent time learning and after mastering the sciences, withdrew from public life into seclusion and worship. He heard someone say: 'You have become a living proof of [correct doctrine sent by] Allāh tāālā for His creation, but you flee from them?' The teacher came back and resumed his teaching.

Al-Zabidi in the explanation of Ghazzali's comments in *The Book of Knowledge*; where⁴¹³ he cites the author⁴¹⁴ of *Qūt*⁴¹⁵ analysing the Ḥadīth 'it is obligatory for every Muslim to seek knowledge':

Among scholars who considered this to be the Knowledge of Tawḥīd,⁴¹⁶ there is a disagreement upon the method of seeking it and the nature of supplementing it. Some said, it is by evidence and reflection;⁴¹⁷ some others said, by research and examination;⁴¹⁸ and yet some others said, by testimony and tradition.⁴¹⁹

One group of scholars⁴²⁰ said: 'This means⁴²¹ to actively seek knowledge of problematic issues and things that cause doubt⁴²² whenever a man comes across such ideas and hears them. However, he is allowed to refrain from seeking [to learn about] these things as long as he is himself unaware of these issues; and as long as he is upon the fundamental faith of all Muslims, and accepts the standard doctrine.'⁴²³

⁴¹¹ *aklatu hashīsh*: grass eaters; one should not confuse this with the modern usage which means drug addicts. These noble people subsisted by eating edible grass and vegetables, hence the address.

⁴¹² A Compendium of the Manifest and the Obscure.

⁴¹³ *It'ḥāf al-Sādah al-Muttaqīn*. vol.1/pg.200.

⁴¹⁴ Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī, Imām of Ahl as-Sunnah of his time, d.386AH

⁴¹⁵ *Qūt al-Qulūb*, by Al-Makkī and one of the earliest books of Tasawwuf; it is said that Imām Ghazzālī used *Qūt* as a model for his *Iḥyā*. Allāh tāālā knows best.

⁴¹⁶ That is Knowledge of Doctrine of Ahlu's Sunnah. It is also known by synonyms: *ilm al-tawḥīd*, *ilm al-uṣūl* or *ilm al-kalām*.

⁴¹⁷ *al-istidlāl wa'l iytibār*

⁴¹⁸ *al-baḥth wa'n naẓar*

⁴¹⁹ *at-tawqīf wa'l athar*

⁴²⁰ That is, scholars of *kalām*

⁴²¹ The original says: he intended; that is, he *ṣallAllāhu alayhi wa sallam* intended [by saying 'seeking knowledge is obligatory...]

⁴²² *mushkilāt - shubuhāt*

⁴²³ of Ahl as-Sunnah

As long as nothing disturbs his thought, nor gnaws from the inside, he is allowed to keep away from doubtful and controversial ideas and he is exempted from researching the reality about such things.

However, if something falls in his ear from such doubtful, controversial or problematic issues and takes root in his heart,⁴²⁴ and he himself does not have the knowledge to resolve it or remove it from his heart, nor have the sufficient knowledge to differentiate between truth and falsehood, then, it is not permissible for him to sit silent.⁴²⁵ Because, otherwise, he may retain a false and heretical belief or negate or repudiate a correct doctrine. Therefore, it becomes obligatory for him to seek knowledge about it⁴²⁶ from the masters of that science and get clarifications from them until he gains confidence and firm belief in the right doctrine and reject false ideas; thereby resolving those issues that perturb him.

He should not neglect seeking knowledge of this kind nor abandon it, because he may then follow his own desire because of doubt, or be doubtful of religion and then depart from the way of the believers. Or he may accept a heretical thought and thus go out of the madh'hab of the Ahl as-Sunnah without even realizing it.

This is why [Abū Bakr] Al-Siddīq said: 'O Allāh! Make truth apparent to us, so that we follow it; and falsehood apparent so that we keep away from it.' This is the madh'hab of Abū Thawr, Ibrāhīm ibn Khālid al-Kalbī, Dāwūd ibn Ālī, Ḥusayn al-Karābīsī, Ḥārth⁴²⁷ ibn Asad al-Muḥāsibī among the *kalām* scholars.

We pray Allāh tāālā to guide wayward Muslims and make them see the truth and recant heretical ideas. We ask Him to make us walk the path of those whom He has guided, and be like those whom He loves – in our lives and in our death. This, by His Immense Favor and we ask Him to save us and all Muslims in these difficult times from evil and mischief. We ask Him for the sake of the Best of creation, our Master Muḥammad *ṣallīAllāhu alayhi wa sallam*.

Allāh tāālā alone gives guidance and success.

⁴²⁴ that is, the idea – whether for or against, finds a place in the heart. In this example, no Muslim was bothered about such an odious idea that falsehood is not impossible for Allāh tāālā. When this is being planted by a group of ignorant scholars, it is now obligatory for anyone who hears it to get a clarification; and for those who know the truth to refute it. Allāh tāālā is a sufficient Helper.

⁴²⁵ Obviously, this means: one should ask the knowledgeable and resolve it. So seeking knowledge about this is obeying the sunnah, not listening to the whispering of the devil. Al-ʿIyādhū Billāh.

⁴²⁶ That particular issue which has been bothering him

⁴²⁷ Two versions of *It'ḥāf*, the Bulaq edition and the modern Dar Kotob al-Ilmiyah edition say Ḥārth; however he is widely known as Ḥārith.

Appendix B

A CLARIFICATION

Did Alahazrat coin the phrase *imkān e kizb* or was it in use prior to his ruling on it? Did Deobandis themselves use it or was it ‘mistranslated’⁴²⁸ by Alahazrat?

1. In *Fayslah Haft-Mas’alah*, Hājī Imdādullāh Muhājir-Makkī mentions the 6th and the 7th question as:

chaTTa aur saatwaN mas’alah: imkan e nazir o imkan e kizb ka
the sixth and seventh issue: on the possibility of similitude and the possibility of falsehood.

2. In *Ek-Rozah* by Isma‘īl Dihlawī, on pg.17, he mentions the phrase *imkān-e-kazib* and perhaps is the first salvo in this controversy.
3. In *Barāhīn e Qaṭiāh*, Khalīl Ahmed mentions this phrase on page 6: ‘this issue of the possibility of falsehood (*imkān e kizb*) is not a new one; the difference of opinion on the matter of *khulf al-wa‘yid* has existed among the ancients.’
4. In *Fatāwā Rashīdiyyah*, a purported letter from Hājī Imdādullāh Muhājir Makkī is presented which mentions the phrase *imkān e kizb* and that it is included in the Divine Power.
5. In *Juhd al-Muqil*⁴²⁹ by Maḥmūd al-Ḥasan Devbandi, he writes:

khulāṣa ye nikla mā bihi’n nizāā bayn al-fariqayn, imkan e kazib fi’l kalām al-lafzi
hai, imkan e kazib fi’l ilm hargiz nahīn
the summary of the dispute between the two groups is in the matter of possibility of falsehood in uttered speech (of Allāh tāālā) not in the possibility of falsehood in His Knowledge.

Thus, tries to prove this corrupt belief; not surprisingly, it is the same fallacious ‘evidence’ that has been regurgitated *ad nauseum* to this day – some, in a few sentences and some in hundreds of pages. Unfortunately, some contemporary scholars have fallen prey to this deception and are circulating an *āqīdah* that has no place in Islam.

⁴²⁸ Nuh Keller, a contemporary American scholar accuses Alahazrat of ‘mistranslating’ this phrase in his article titled *Iman, Kufr and Takfir*.

⁴²⁹ *Juhd al-Muqill*, means ‘hardship of a poor man’ as mentioned in Ḥadīth. The Saharanpur edition (published in the lifetime of the author) has diacritics on the title to read: *Jahd ul-Muqill*, which means: ‘toiling of a poor man’. Indeed, this is the ‘toiling of a beggar.’ It is obvious that similar to contemporary ‘scholars,’ this ‘scholar’ from Deoband is ignorant of *āqīdah*, *kalām* and logic. As if, the title of the book already declares the poverty of thought and faith in that book.

Appendix C

OBSCURE STATEMENTS IN BOOKS OF KALĀM

A drowning man clutches at a straw, hoping that it will save him. When irreligious people are refuted soundly, they cling to obscure statements found in books of kalām and try to justify their odious belief. It is strange that we have to cite from scores of books to prove that falsehood is *muḥāl* for Allāh tāālā; but the opposite camp thinks that quoting a couple of problematic passages will absolve them (and their elders who first made these mistakes) from all blame.

The first thing is that kalām books tend to be long winded and the reader is expected to keep track of the original comment, objections, counter-objections and so forth. In many places, Jurjānī's dialectic gets a bit confusing – the casual reader [or the quote-hunter]⁴³⁰ who is starting from the middle, might be misled easily into thinking that this is the position of Jurjānī himself. It is important to remember the advice of Al-Ījī in his book warning against such dangers:⁴³¹

And you know the madh'hab of Ahl al-Ĥaqq⁴³² that sight is created by Allāh tāālā in the living and it is not necessary to put conditions of light, nor facing or otherwise. We shall not object to such things, relying upon your knowledge⁴³³ where it is relevant.

Jurjānī in his commentary elaborates:⁴³⁴

{We shall not object to such things, relying upon your knowledge where it is relevant} Thus, it is mandatory for you to consider [and be mindful of]⁴³⁵ the principles of Ahl al-Ĥaqq in all the discussions we make, even if we do not explicitly mention them.

Al-Ījī and Al-Jurjānī are clearly saying that 'in the course of our discussions we shall state the positions of others without mentioning our objections; and we rely upon your knowledge to recognize this. The rule of thumb in all these discussions is you should measure it against the principles and statements made in the true creed of the righteous folk [and follow it] even if we do not explicitly describe that.

In *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*, Al-Taftāzānī says:⁴³⁶

There are numerous opinions of philosophers that are false and invalid [according to our religious belief] and mentioned without stating [our] objection or refuting them, except where additional clarification is required.

Therefore, it is important always, to hold to the principles of Ahl al-Ĥaqq when reading books of kalām; and no matter what is said in there, one should not lose track of the correct aqīdah.

⁴³⁰ Someone who browses books to search for a quote of his liking, with scant regard to context or even bothering if the quote is a citation in itself!

⁴³¹ *Al-Mawāqif*, Pg.133 Third Standpoint: Third Rank: The First Category: Second Objective. [mawqif al-thālith; maṣḍad al-thālith; al-qisam al-awwal, maqṣad al-thānī]

⁴³² Ahl al-Haqq is the phrase used to refer Ahl as-Sunnah Muslims because they are on the Right Path. Literally, The People in the Right [or with the right creed]

⁴³³ That is the position of Ahl al-Ĥaqq

⁴³⁴ *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, Vol.5, Pg.246

⁴³⁵ *riāyah*

⁴³⁶ *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*, Vol.2/Pg.273; The Third Objective: First Category: Third Type.

A. The problematic quote of *Sharḥ Al-Mawāqif* as cited by a heretic:⁴³⁷

It is written in *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*: "The entire Mu'tazilah and Khawarij consider punishing the sinner if he dies without repentance necessary (wajib) and do not consider possible Allah will forgive him, by a twofold reasoning: First, He has threatened with punishment for major sins and informed (us) of it and if He does not punish and forgives, renegeing on His threat and lying would result, and they are impossible (muhal). The response is: its objective [i.e. the threat's] is the incidence (wuqu) of punishment, so where is the necessity of punishment concerning which our discussion is on (?) since there is no doubt that non-necessity and incidence does not entail renegeing or lying. It cannot be said: 'it entails their possibility, which too is impossible (muhal)', because we say: 'its impossibility is untrue – how so, when they are from the possibilities (mumkinat) which His power include'."

أوجب جميع المعتزلة و الخوارج عقاب صاحب الكبيرة إذا مات بلا توبة و لم يجوزوا أن يعفو الله عنه بوجهين ، الأول : أنه تعالى أوعد بالعقاب على الكبائر و أخبر به أي بالعقاب عليها فلو لم يعاقب على الكبيرة و عفا لزم الخلف في وعيده و الكذب في خبره و إنه محال ، و الجواب : غايته وقوع العقاب فأين وجوب العقاب الذي كلامنا فيه ؟ إذ لا شبهة في أن عدم الوجوب مع الوقوع لا يستلزم خلفاً و لا كذباً ، لا يقال: إنه يستلزم جوازهما و هو أيضا محال ، لأننا نقول : استحالته ممنوعة ، كيف و هما من الممكنات التي تشملهما قدرته تعالى

B. Context for this quote vis-à-vis other quotes:

Translations that were presented earlier were from the main discussion about Speech; and a direct argument against falsehood was presented there; whereas, this seemingly problematic quote is found in the discussion of 'good-ugly' as a dialectic argument. It is obvious that a lone statement within a subsidiary argument cannot be presented as a statement of faith, where a direct argument is already presented contradicting and refuting it.

Moreover, Al-Jurjānī himself states his position prior to this dialectic when he says:⁴³⁸

The basis of our saying that falsehood is impossible for Allāh tālā is not because it is considered as an ugly thing by intellect,⁴³⁹ because, if falsehood is not considered ugly, then it necessitates that falsehood does not remain *muḥāl* anymore; therefore, there is another basis for this; which we have explained earlier.⁴⁴⁰

So, the argument in the above quote is about the validity of stating *qubḥ al-áqlī* as proof for refuting falsehood; not a dispute about falsehood itself. Actually, Állāmah Sharīf is using the Mutazilah argument to refute them when he prefixes as '*then we shall say*' which actually means, 'so we bring your other argument to refute this one'.

⁴³⁷ *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, Vol.8, Pg.331. This was posted on an internet forum.

⁴³⁸ *Ibid*, Vol.8, Pg.214

⁴³⁹ *qubḥ al-áqlī*

⁴⁴⁰ that it is because falsehood is a flaw and a flaw is impossible for Allāh tālā.

Why would Sharīf make such blatant mistake when he has himself presented lengthy proofs earlier, that falsehood is *muḥāl*? Moreover, why would he say something without providing proof – that which contradicts almost every Sunni mutakallim?

At this point, I will only point out that when Sharīf says: ‘*because then we shall say*’ he is actually saying: ‘If you say so, then we shall say [citing your own principle]: ‘that you cannot claim it is *mustaḥīl* because [according to you] they are *mumkin* and are included in Divine Power.’⁴⁴¹

I will engage in a similar dialectic with those who pose this argument: The most important issue here is the explicit statement that it is *mumkin*. If you already believe that Sharīf said it is *mumkin* and included in Allāh’s Divine Power, then why do you present so many excuses and confuse commonfolk by naming terms they do not understand?⁴⁴² Why don’t you explicitly state it as your *áqīdah* and do away with all pretenses of *imtināá bi’l ghayr* etc?

What about Al-Jurjānī’s own assertion that it is *muḥāl* in the very same book in its appropriate place? Why did he have to prove that *kadhib* is *muḥāl* in the first place? All he had to do was just say: ‘*kadhib* is *mumkin*.’ End of story.

The fact is, that it is a Mútazilī principle that *kadhib* and *žulm* are included in Divine Power. Every student of kalām and hersiology knows this. Ábd al-Qāhir⁴⁴³ al-Baghdādī *Al-Milal wa’n Niḥal* says:⁴⁴⁴

Historians narrate about a gathering of seven prominent Mútazilī scholars and their argument about the issue of Divine Power over oppression and falsehood.

Some statements of Mútazilah scholars mentioned in the story are:

- [And Abu’l Hudhayl] said: ‘I say that Allāh táālā has Power on that He can oppress and that He can lie; and because He knows that He will not do them.
- Bishr ibn Al-Mútamir said: I say that Allāh táālā has Power over all those things.
- Al-Ashbah⁴⁴⁵ said: I say that He has Power over oppression and falsehood.

Concluding the story, he writes:

These people [the Mútazilah] were forced to accept their inability to answer in this issue. If they were guided to the correct answer, and came back to our answer that Allāh táālā has Divine Power over all things subject to His Power [*maqdūr*], and if He did it, it would not be oppression; they would [also] consider falsehood *muḥāl* like we⁴⁴⁶ consider it *muḥāl* and would be blessed with [this correct belief].

Praise be to Allāh táālā who has vouchsafed us and delivered us from such heresy, and because of which they are confused and perplexed, like Jews and Christians are [in issues specific to them].

⁴⁴¹ The proof for this is given in the following sub-sections.

⁴⁴² And therefore, those terms are described separately in this paper.

⁴⁴³ Abū Manṣūr Ábd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī, d.429AH – He is famous for his other book *Al-Farq Bayn al-Firaq*.

⁴⁴⁴ *Al-Milal wa’n Niḥal*, Al-Baghdādī Pgs.136-138

⁴⁴⁵ In the footnote by Al-Kawtharī it is, Al-Ashajj and that he was a contemporary of the prominent Mútazilī, Bishr ibn al-Mútamir.

⁴⁴⁶ The Ahlu’s Sunnah

Notice that ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī plainly says that the Sunni position is that ‘falsehood is *muḥāl*.’ And the Mútaẓilī position is that ‘falsehood and oppression are included in Allāh’s Power’.

Al-Baghdādī in his other work, *Al-Farq Bayn al-Firaq* listing the heresies of Mútaẓilah mentions this issue as a Mútaẓilī belief. Under the entry of *Iskāfi*:⁴⁴⁷

And he⁴⁴⁸ contradicted those of his elders who said that Allāh táālā has power over oppression and falsehood; but He does not do them because of His knowledge that they are ugly and that His being free of doing [ugly things].

Muḥammad Al-Shahristānī, whom Sharīf Al-Jurjānī praises as knowledgeable of the positions of the community of *kalām* scholars, says in his *Al-Milal wa’n Niḥal* discussing Mardāriyyah:⁴⁴⁹

Followers of ʿYīsā ibn Ṣabiḥ Al-Mardār, student of Bishr ibn al-Mútamir:

The first [among his heresies]: is his position concerning Divine Power of Allāh táālā and that He has power to lie and to oppress. And if He did lie and oppress, He would be the oppressing and the lying god.

Exalted is Allāh from what he⁴⁵⁰ says!

SubḥānAllāh! Notice how Shahristānī expresses his revulsion from such an ugly belief. Shahristani, whom Sharīf praised as quite knowledgeable considers it abhorrent; did Sharīf al-Jurjānī not know this?

And finally, let us see what Imām Abū’l Ḥasan al-Ashārī said about it. Talking about the Mútaẓilī heresies, he mentions many of them who claimed that Allāh táālā has power to lie and oppress; in the 15th statement he says:⁴⁵¹

Abū Mūsā⁴⁵² and many Mútaẓilah said: ‘Verily Allāh táālā has power to oppress and lie, but He does not do them. If they are asked: ‘Suppose He does?’ They said: ‘Fundamentally, He doesn’t do such things.’

These statements are so ugly that no one considers it good to describe a righteous Muslim in such words! Similarly, one cannot describe Allāh táālā with such ascriptions – Glorified is He.

Does the zindiq still claim that Jurjānī was ignorant of such basic positions? As mentioned in the ḥadīth of the Messenger *ṣallAllāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*:⁴⁵³

If you have no shame, do whatever you want.

Only Allāh táālā gives guidance.

⁴⁴⁷ *Al-Farq Bayn al-Firaq*, Pg. 125

⁴⁴⁸ Abū Jāfar Muḥammad ibn Abdullah al-Iskāfi, d.240 AH.

⁴⁴⁹ *Al-Milal wa’n Niḥal*, Al-Shahristānī Pg.54, Mardāriyyah among the Mútaẓilah.

⁴⁵⁰ that is, the heretic Al-Mardār.

⁴⁵¹ *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, Vol.2 Pg.209, Maqālah 260.

⁴⁵² this is Al-Mardār as we learn from Al-Shahristānī.

⁴⁵³ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, ḥadīth 3483

C. Translation of the original text and the problematic passage from the commentary:

The discussion is about the Mútazilī position, in *Al-Mawāqif*:⁴⁵⁴

The Fifth Objective: The Mútazilah have derivation based on their principle of rational ruling and obligation upon Allāh táālā; and that which examined here is about reward and punishment.

Describing the issue, he says:

As for punishment, there are two points to discuss here:

The First Point: All the Mútazilah and Khawārij say that it is obligatory for Allāh táālā to punish those who commit major sins for two reasons:

The First Reason: Because He has promised punishment and has given information about it [that He will punish them]; if He does not punish them, it will entail breaking a promise and [presence of] falsehood in His information, and this is *muḥāl*.

[Our] **Answer:** The furthest extent is the occurrence of punishment; so where is the obligation?

Let the reader note that the context is not the discussion of the issue per se; but rather an objection resulting from the Mútazilī principle of ‘obligation on Allāh táālā.’ We say that there is no obligation on Allāh táālā whatsoever. In its commentary by Sharīf al-Jurjānī:⁴⁵⁵

{As for punishment, there are two discussions. The first: All [scholars of] Mútazilah and Khawārij⁴⁵⁶ said that it was wājib for Allāh táālā to punish those who commit major sins.} That is, when he dies without repentance and they said that it was not possible for Allāh táālā to forgive them. {This, for two reasons: First because Allāh} táālā {promised punishment} for those who commit major sins {and gave information about this} that is about the punishment for committing major sins {and if He does not punish them} on their major sins and forgave them, {then it necessitates khulf – reneging on his promise of punishment and falsehood in His speech which is *muḥāl*.}

{The answer is: the furthest extent is for punishment to occur, so where is the obligation?} in which we dispute; because, there is no doubt that the occurrence [of punishment] without obligation [upon Allāh táālā] does not necessitate either *khulf* [reneging on promise] nor *kadhib* [falsehood].

One cannot say: [But] that will necessitate that considering them both [*khulf* and *kadhib*] as contingent, which is also *muḥāl*.⁴⁵⁷

⁴⁵⁴ *Al-Mawāqif*, Pg.376

⁴⁵⁵ *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, Vol.8, Pg.331

⁴⁵⁶ the Kharijites, extremist faction and forerunners of today’s Wahhabis. They derive the name from going out against the fourth and the rightfully guided caliph, Ālī radīyAllāhu ānhū.

⁴⁵⁷ that is, converting a *muḥāl* to *jāyiz* is *muḥāl*.

Then we shall say: ruling that both [*khulf* and *kadhib*] as *muḥāl* is not permitted; how can it be when they are among contingent things which are included in the Divine Power of Allāh táālā.

These kinds of arguments are common⁴⁵⁸ in both *Al-Mawāqif* and its commentary. *lā yuqāl / li annā naqūl*, 'let this not be said/because then we shall say' is usually given as an accusative proof where the latter is also the statement of those who have stated the objection.

For example, in the chapter on Divine Power, Al-Ījī mentions the Mútazilī confusion about free will and Divine Power of the Creator, and says:⁴⁵⁹

Don't say: That which is subject to Allāh's power will happen, because His Power is all encompassing;

Because then we will say: The meaning of Encompassing Power in relation to all other things except this thing upon which creation has power [*maqḍūr*]. So He has no influence in this thing [*maqḍūr*] and both the Creator and the slave are equal with respect to this thing.

Is Ījī saying that Allāh táālā has no power on actions of creation? Indeed, anyone with elementary knowledge of *áqīdah* and the history of Mútazilah will scoff at such a misreading of the text. This is the kind of casual browsing that Ījī lamented in the preface of his book:

And among such,⁴⁶⁰ are those similar to a person fetching firewood in a pitch dark night; and one bereft of men and mount.⁴⁶¹ He collects what he finds from the statements of kalām scholars⁴⁶² and copies them blindly, without using his mind – and does not realize whether that which he has gathered has festered and worthless, or valuable and priceless. And [doesn't know whether] that, which he has put together is weak and absurd or strong and anchored.

A little earlier, in the same preface, which is very relevant to those who insist on Sharīf al-Jurjānī's seemingly confusing line, he says:

Among this kind, is one who fabricates and [cites] mistakes, just to further his own opinion – without realizing that there are critics behind him [who will expose him]. And one who looks at mere premises and propositions⁴⁶³ and chooses what suits his deplorable opinion; and sometimes, he goes back to use some parts of these to disprove others, because of his abject confusion.⁴⁶⁴

⁴⁵⁸ For some more examples see *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*: Vol.8, Pg.73, Pg.82; Vol.6, Pg.88 and I skip translations because they are out of scope of our discussion.

⁴⁵⁹ *Al-Mawāqif*, Pg.285

⁴⁶⁰ incompetent people, without clear understanding of either *kalām* or *áqīdah*

⁴⁶¹ powerless and without aid.

⁴⁶² *kalām al-qawm*: here 'community' means scholars of kalām.

⁴⁶³ *muqaddimah al-kubra* and *muqaddimah al-ṣughrā* : major premiss and minor premiss; it could also mean mere introductions, but given the context it is about premises – using them here and there and arriving at wrong conclusions.

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid. I have used Al-Jurjānī's commentary in the translation itself for clarity.

No comment would have been as apt as Ījī's in this affair. In the above lines, he rejects those who pick up a line here or there and are all perplexed and confused. And without a firm grounding in principles, they try to apply this piece on others making blunders and ascribing them to *ulamā* while in reality, this was never the intention of the authors.

Any judicious person should be convinced by now; but some people may adamantly insist that Sharīf is stating his own position. Therefore, I will try to persuade them with yet another proof. Imām Fakhruddīn Rāzī in his *Muḥaṣṣal Afkār al-Mutaqaddimīn wa'l Muta-akh'khirīn* says:⁴⁶⁵

Article: The information given by Allāh tāālā is Truth

Because falsehood is a flaw and it is *muḥāl* for Allāh tāālā. And it is so because, if He could utter falsehood, then His falsehood would be pre-eternal; and if this were so, then truth would be *muḥāl* for Him.

However, the latter statement⁴⁶⁶ is itself *muḥāl*. Because, for everyone who knows something – he knows about that information to be true in itself.⁴⁶⁷ And this is known by necessity.⁴⁶⁸

Don't say: Alright; that which you mention is proof that the information which is pre-eternal is truth; but this does not prove that these words are also true.⁴⁶⁹

Because, then we shall say to the Mútazilah: This also is an entailing proof [against] you. Because according to you, elision and concealment [in *kalām lafẓī*], which we don't know, is possible; and this possibility makes these apparent words unreliable.⁴⁷⁰

Notice that this *lā yuqāl / li annā naqūl* is the style of mutakallimūn. Ignoramuses who do not have an idea of correct *áqīdah* or methodology of *kalām* scholars, strut their ignorance and are causing people to go astray. Állāmah Sharīf is using a similar dialectic – and only an idiot will claim that Imām Rāzī believed in *hadhaf* and *iḍmār* [elision and hiding] of *kalām lafẓī*.

As a bonus, Imām Rāzī is not only proving falsehood *muḥāl* in this quote, but also proving that it is *muḥāl* in both *kalām nafsī* and *kalām lafẓī*.

⁴⁶⁵ *Muḥaṣṣal Afkār al-Mutaqaddimīn wa'l Muta-akh'khirīn*, Imām Rāzī. Pg.185

⁴⁶⁶ 'that truth is impossible' is by way observation of *muḥāl*; he explains this in the next paragraph.

⁴⁶⁷ therefore *ṣidq* cannot be *muḥāl*.

⁴⁶⁸ common knowledge. *ḍarūrah*.

⁴⁶⁹ notice that this claim of possibility of falsehood in *kalām lafẓī* is also a Mútazilah belief.

⁴⁷⁰ Though Nasīruddīn Ṭūsī in his commentary titled *Talkhiṣ al-Muḥaṣṣal* contests that this is not the Mútazilah position, he does not deny that *kadhīb* is *muḥāl*.

D. Comments on this quote by other scholars

1. Al-Dawwānī commenting on this quote summarily rejects it and says:⁴⁷¹

I say: falsehood is a flaw and a flaw for Allāh tāālā is *muḥāl*. It is not included in the *mumkināt* and neither is it included in Divine Power. And this, just as His Divine Power does not include anything that implies that there is a flaw in Him – *exalted is He* – like ignorance [*jahī*] and powerlessness [*ájz*]; or negation of the attribute of Speech or any other such attribute of perfection.

2. In a gloss of the above:⁴⁷²

[And I say:]⁴⁷³ so that you don't heed Sharīf's objection [upon which Al-Dawwānī answers]

3. Al-Siyālkūti in his supercommentary:

If you say: Falsehood is a flaw which is *mustaḥīl* for Allāh tāālā by *ijmā'a*; and there is no doubt that it is impossible to convert an impossible thing into a contingent thing.⁴⁷⁴

I say: It is obvious that this comment is made with respect to the Mutazilah argument and they speak not, except about *kalām lafẓī*. It was mentioned earlier that flaw in *kalām lafẓī* is another form of *qubḥ áqlī* – but we don't say this.

Yes, it is proven by the information given by the Prophet *ṣallAllāhu álayhi wa sallam* that His Speech [is *kalām lafẓī*] does not have falsehood absolutely. But the fact that it is *muḥāl* intrinsically [for *kalām lafẓī*] based on the fact that it is a flaw cannot be used as an evidence [in this case].

What remains then, is the argument of the Mutazilah that something is obligatory [*wājib*] for Allāh tāālā, The Wise, during appropriate conditions and what befits wisdom; such that He does not have power over it and that it is obligatory for Him to do it. In addition to what they consider *wājib* for Allāh tāālā, they say that He has a choice in what He does. There is no difference [of opinion] amongst Mutazilah on this [point].

And using this [argument,] which they posit comprising their answer, their original premiss is being refuted; and that is what is being discussed here. Ponder.

Siyalkuti is clarifying the context in which Al-Jurjānī's problematic statement is made. Certainly, this is not the position of Sharīf himself, but rather he is using one Mutazili argument to refute another.

⁴⁷¹ *Sharḥ Áqāyid al-Áḍudiyyah*, Jalāluddīn Dawwānī, Pg.65

⁴⁷² See the Diaber Manuscript no.1200 of Sharḥ Jalāluddīn álá Áḍud; the commentary is anonymous or by the various names found there in: Íṣām, Muḥiyuddīn ibn al-Khaṭīb, Aḥmed Ḥaydar, Masúūd, Muḥammad Amīn, Jamāluddīn and Mahmūd Ḥasan. The MS is signed 1094 AH. Page 119.

⁴⁷³ This is Dawwānī commenting on Sharīf's objection. Notice that they are talking about Sharīf's 'objection' not his statement. Ponder.

⁴⁷⁴ *jawāz al-muḥāl*, muḥāl.

E. The *Musāyarah/Musāmarah* Problem:

Another quote is fished out of *Al-Musāyarah* of Ibn Humām and its commentary by Ibn Abi'sh Sharīf. Thus cite the Deobandis⁴⁷⁵:

Kamal ibn Hummam in *Musayarah*: "The author of *al-Umdah* then said 'Allah is not attributed with the Power of injustice, vulgarity or lying since the impossible (*muhal*) is not included in His Power i.e. their affiliation to it is not right, and according to the *Mu'tazilah* He is able to do all these but does not do so'. It appears he [the author of *Umdah*] (inadvertently) confused what the *Mu'tazilah* say, since there is no doubt that the detraction from Allah's Power as he mentions is the madhhab of the *Mu'tazilah*;

and as for its affirmation (i.e. Power) for what was mentioned but its impossibility (*imtina'*) in connection with them out of choice (*ikhtiyar*) is the madhhab of the *Ash'aris*. And it is not hidden that this view also declares transcendence (*tanzih*) since there is no doubt that the impossibility of them (lying, vulgarity and injustice) is from the topic of *Tanzihat* which cannot be attributed to His Holiness"

InshāAllāh, a detailed analysis of this quote will be made separately later, but what I want to say here is that this is an ambiguous and a jumbled quote. One should not use it to claim that this was Ibn Humām's own belief. Because, in many places both Ibn Humām and the commentator, his own student, Ibn Abi'sh Sharīf categorically state that *kadhib* is *muḥāl* and clarify their own position.

In the text, the two imāms say:⁴⁷⁶

{so much so that, many of them} that is prominent *Ashārīs* {are perplexed in the ruling that falsehood is *muḥāl* for Allah ta'ala because it is a flaw.}

Notice that the emphasis is on 'because'. In other words, they do not dispute that it is *muḥāl*; only perplexed, whether the evidence of 'flaw' is sufficient to answer all objections. Elsewhere the commentator says discussing the Divine Attributes:⁴⁷⁷

And falsehood is *muḥāl* for Allāh tāālā

In the same book, again:⁴⁷⁸

{yes} according to this facet [it is necessary to have belief in Allāh taala and] obligatory {to venerate Him and to consider it impermissible to attribute him with ugly things} exalted is He – from things like, falsehood and vileness, indecency.

In the same book, again:⁴⁷⁹

We answer: there is no difference of opinion among *Ashārīs* or others that anything that is counted as a flaw for creation, then, the Creator is [also] transcendent from that.

⁴⁷⁵ This is the Deobandi translation.

⁴⁷⁶ *Al-Musāyarah and Al-Musāmarah*, Pg.176: The Third Pillar. Text in bold and brown color and in square brackets is by Ibn Humām; plain blue is Ibn Abi'sh Sharīf.

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid. Pg.92: The Second Pillar: Knowledge of the Attributes of Allah

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid. Pg. 159: The Third Pillar.

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid. Pg. 178

He is free from it and it is impossible – *muḥāl* – for Allāh táālā. And falsehood is an attribute of flaw/fault for creation.⁴⁸⁰

As if, this is not sufficient, both authors write clarifying their own position in the conclusion of the book:⁴⁸¹

{It is absolutely impossible⁴⁸² for Him} Sanctified is He {from all attributes⁴⁸³ of flaw like ignorance and falsehood;} rather it is also absolutely impossible for Him to have any attribute that has neither perfection nor flaw, because every attribute of the Lord Almighty Allāh is that of Perfection.

The *falsists* still insist that Ibn Humam admitted difference of opinion. Even after his own Ashārī student has categorically stated that it is *muḥāl*.

F. The Principle Of Good Faith

Suppose there is no linguistic basis to claim that it refers to the Mutazilah argument in the commentator’s statement “we say...” One should have good faith about early *úlamā* and interpret their ambiguous and unclear passages to conform to that which they have clearly expressed. Sharīf Al-Jurjānī himself says exonerating Imām Al-Ashārī⁴⁸⁴ from a position attributed to him.

This is what they have understood from the statements of the Shaykh; which necessitate a number of problems, like not doing takfir of a person who denies that it is Divine Speech between the two covers of a *muṣ-ḥaf*⁴⁸⁵.

Even though it is a fact, that knowing this, is a requirement and among the necessities of religion that, it is actually the Speech of Allāh táālā. [and not doing takfir for one who] objects or challenges the actual Speech of Allāh táālā; [and not doing takfir of one] who denies that the recited and the memorized is in reality the Speech of Allāh táālā.

And other such things which are not concealed from an astute person who is aware of rulings of the religion.⁴⁸⁶ Therefore, it is necessary for us to vindicate the Shaykh by ascribing to him, that his intention was the second meaning, that is, *kalām nafsī* according to him included both words and meaning, and together, the pre-eternal attribute of Allāh táālā, written in the *muṣ-ḥafs*, recited by tongues, memorized and safeguarded in bosoms: however, that which was written, recited and memorized are accidents.⁴⁸⁷

⁴⁸⁰ Therefore, it is *muḥāl* for Allāh táālā.

⁴⁸¹ Ibid. Pg.326 Conclusion: The Belief of Ahlu’s Sunnah.

⁴⁸² *muḥāl*

⁴⁸³ in a minor difference in texts, samāt and ṣifāt are used.

⁴⁸⁴ *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, Vol.8 Pg.117

⁴⁸⁵ *muṣ-ḥaf*: copy of the Qur’ān.

⁴⁸⁶ This is clear indication that such things which are commonly known by intelligent and religious people and the standard Áqīdah of Ahl as-Sunnah

⁴⁸⁷ that is, ink, paper, voice etc.

G. The Style of Kalām Books:

Books of kalām are full of such dialectical arguments. People should not use these quotes to justify opposition to established *áqīdah*. We should not abandon their well-articulated position in favor of ambiguous quotes. In *Tárifāt*, Al-Jurjānī describing the term '*Al-Madh'hab al-Kalāmi*':⁴⁸⁸

The methodology of *kalām*: is to bring evidence similar to the manner of *kalām* scholars; to state the entailment and demonstrate the exclusion of that conclusion; or by disproving the proposition; or by introduction of a conjunction [with other conjunctions] and derive the conclusion.

An example is the saying of Allāh táālā: **if there were [many] gods other than [one] Allāh, there would be chaos in [the heavens and the earth.]**⁴⁸⁹ Here, we see that:

- a) There is no chaos,
- b) Therefore [the conclusion:] there are not many gods.

Similarly, the verse: **and when [the star] waned, he said: I do not like those that wane**⁴⁹⁰ means:

- a) The star wanes
- b) And my Lord Almighty does not wane;
- c) Therefore, the star is not my Lord.

Notice, in the second example, Sayyidunā Ibrāhīm *alayhi's salām* did not originally consider the star as his Lord when he said: '**This is my Lord.**'⁴⁹¹

Books of *kalām* are full of such *jawāb ilzāmī*, accusative proofs; and one those who are not acquainted with their method are bound to stumble. We have seen Ījī and Jurjānī warn about this pitfall earlier. Scholars who came after them took a strong exception to this method and thus, in the commentary⁴⁹² of his own *Umm al-Barāhīn*, Al-Sanūsī says:

Let the beginner be warned and be careful in his endeavor, that he does not take the fundamental articles of religion from those books, which are full of philosophical arguments; in which the respective authors have taken a fancy to narrate the capricious quotes⁴⁹³ of philosophers. Some of such quotes are outright disbelief; they⁴⁹⁴ veil this filth [of kufr] in their *áqīdah* by burying it in numerous terms and arcane descriptions, which are mere names without any substance. Such⁴⁹⁵ are found, for example, in books of Fakhr al-Rāzī in [the science of] *kalām*, *Tawālīy* of Al-Bayḏāwī and those who followed them in their methodology.

⁴⁸⁸ *At-Tárifāt*, Pg.220

⁴⁸⁹ Sūrah Al-Anbiyā'a, Verse.22

⁴⁹⁰ Sūrah Al-Anáám, Verse.76

⁴⁹¹ Ibid.

⁴⁹² *Sharḥ al-Sughrā* with Al-Dasūqī's marginalia, Pg.107

⁴⁹³ hawasihim

⁴⁹⁴ the philosophers, that is.

⁴⁹⁵ Al-Dasūqī in his supercommentary says: "...books, in which such statements of philosophers are mentioned."

Those who fancy the arguments of philosophers will rarely succeed; or be blessed with the light of faith shining in their hearts and tongues.

How can one prosper while befriending those who are enemies of Allāh and His Messenger? *ṣallīAllāhu alayhi wa sallam* How can one be successful by tearing up the veil of Divine Respect and throwing the *sharī'ah* behind him and saying things about our Lord Almighty Allāh – *Exalted is He* – and things about His Messengers [peace and blessings upon all of them] whatever pleases his own *nafs*, the ego of idiots and morons...

Imām Sanūsī clearly dismisses any such ideas – whether by mistake or by misunderstanding – that do not conform to established *āqīdah* of Ahl as-Sunnah. Particularly those found in books of *kalām*, which cannot be used to justify a false and corrupt *āqīdah*. Al-Dasuqi in his commentary⁴⁹⁶ indicates that such misunderstanding can occur for those who do not understand the style of these books or lack the proper context. Hunting for quotes in *kalām* books to justify a putrid *āqīdah* is not the character of a Muslim.

H. Texts from the Ḥadīth and the Qur'ān that outwardly contradict established Sunni Āqīdah:

There are parts in the ḥadīth of the Prophet *ṣallīAllāhu alayhi wa sallam* and the Qur'ān which can cause one to go astray if not understood properly, or taken literally. The very mischief of anthropomorphists and other deviant groups is because of literal interpretations of the Qur'ān and Sunnah.

So what does one do when they find such a problematic quote? Do they base their *āqīdah* on this or do they do *ta'wīl* to find a resolution and explain the quote? And this is the Qur'ān and the Sunnah! Any denial could place one in a very difficult predicament. Yet, the ruling concerning such abstruse verses is that we must try to adapt them according to the well-established creed of Ahlu's Sunnah. Imām Rāzī commenting on apparently problematic verses and hadith says:⁴⁹⁷

...and if we cannot reconcile statements⁴⁹⁸ we must submit to Allāh's knowledge about such things [and keep silent.] This is the general principle concerning all such abstruse verses. Guidance is with Allāh.

If this be the case with Qur'ān and Sunnah, then why should we take Al-Jurjānī's quote literally and adamantly insist that this is a valid *āqīdah*? So what, if he really said it?⁴⁹⁹ One does not become a kafir by rejecting a quote in a book of *kalām*, which openly contradicts the *āqīdah* of Ahl as-Sunnah. The safest way for a Muslim is to follow the *āqīdah* of the *ijmā'ā*, and indeed among which is the opinion of Sharīf al-Jurjānī himself as it is clear from his own books.

⁴⁹⁶ Al-Dasuqī commenting on Imām Sanūsī's text above: [Fakhr ar-Rāzī and Al-Bayḏāwī...] that is, those who followed them like Al-Armawī, Āllāmah Saād, Aḏududdīn and Ibn Ārafah. Burhānuddīn Al-Laqqānī said in *Hidāyatu'l Murīd* that the discussions of the earlier *ulamā* was restricted to Essence [*dhāt*], Attributes [*ṣifāt*], Prophethood [*nubuwwāt*] and Revealed Evidence [*sam'yīyyāt*]. Various groups of heretics then began debating *ulamā* of Islam increasingly, and planted doubts and objections on what the earlier *ulamā* had said; they mixed up these objections with philosophical terms and concepts to conceal their heresies. When such things came up, the latter *ulamā* like Fakhruddīn Al-Rāzī (and those mentioned along with him earlier) were compelled to include these terms and objections, so as to repel these ideas and refute them. And thus [Sunnis] prevail over them by refuting their heresies using their own terms and the fallacies in their objections and assertions.

It is obvious that these *ulamā* should be excused for including these concepts in their books and there is no blame on them for doing so; and they are not to be admonished for this. However, the warning of scholars who came after them is for the faltering ones who do not properly understand these arguments.

⁴⁹⁷ *Asās al-Taqdīs*, Imām Rāzī. Pg.126 Chapter 32: Concerning the rational proofs contradicting literal meaning of evidence by revelation.

⁴⁹⁸ that is, if we cannot do *ta'wīl* of such verses and ḥadīth

⁴⁹⁹ Let the deviants not point out that I accept Jurjānī said so; we don't accept that Jurjānī said this nor believed in this himself.

I. The Value of Evidence and the *Ĥatibu'l Layl*:⁵⁰⁰

How many more principles will the Falsists sacrifice to save their blundering mullas? Truly, this is a shameful example of blind following. These two proofs provided in their claim, that it is an Ashārī belief are by Māturīdī authors. One may ask, 'why is it surprising?' The answer lies in going back to their reasoning process:

1. Deobandis claimed that falsehood is *mumkin*.
2. When challenged, they said, it is a sub-division of *khulf*.
3. And that some Ashārīs held that *khulf* is possible.
4. The Māturīdīs protested that *khulf* would necessitate falsehood.
5. Therefore, some Ashārīs held that falsehood is possible.
6. And to prove 5 above they present evidence from Māturīdī authors.

Whereas in reality, Ashārī scholars rejected this accusation and gave their evidence on how it does not necessitate falsehood. Using the evidence of Māturīdī scholars to implicate Ashārīs in a matter, which there is an accusation-defence, and claiming that it is an Ashārī position, is a travesty of examining evidence. Perhaps all these scholars and their blind followers should read basic books of reasoning. Indeed, we have presented evidence from many scholars in our paper to refute the claim that there is 'a difference of opinion'.

Allāh táālā knows best.

⁵⁰⁰ fetching wood in the night: doesn't know what he has picked – firewood or serpents.

Appendix D

TRANSLITERATION TABLE

	Arabic Letter	Latin Character	Arabic Example	Transliteration	English Equivalent
1	أ اء	a	أمير	amīr	amazing
2	ب	b	باب	bāb	basket
3	ت ة	t	تاج	tāj	(soft)
4	ث	th	ثابت	thābit	thing
5	ج	j	جسد	jasad	jam
6	ح	ḥ	حسن	ḥasan	guttural, deep like hose no english equivalent
7	خ	kh	خبر	khabar	similar to german munich guttural ch; no english equivalent
8	د	d	دار	dār	(soft)
9	ذ	dh	ذكر	dhikr	there
10	ر	r	راشد	rāshid	rose
11	ز	z	زكي	zakī	zebra
12	س	s	سهل	sahl	solid
13	ش	sh	شاب	shāb	shock
14	ص	ṣ	صبر	ṣabr	full rounded, like somber no english equivalent
15	ض	ḍ	ضياء	ḍiyā'a	close to daughter no english equivalent
16	ط	ṭ	طب	ṭibb	full rounded, soft t no english equivalent
17	ظ	ẓ	ظلم	ẓulm	full rounded, soft d no english equivalent
18	ع	ā, ī, ū, y	عرب علم عمر عيد	ārab ilm ūmar yīd	guttural a no english equivalent
19	غ	gh	غار	ghār	guttural g no english equivalent
20	ف	f	فجر	fajr	flower
21	ق	q	قريب	qarib	guttural k no english equivalent
22	ك	k	كتاب	kitāb	kin
23	ل	l	لباس	libās	late

	Arabic Letter	Latin Character	Arabic Example	Transliteration	English Equivalent
24	م	m	مال	māl	morning
25	ن	n	نار	nār	noon
26	هـ	h	هدى	hudā	house
27	و	w	وزير	wazīr	word
28	ي	y	يد	yad	yellow
29	إ	i	إدام	idām	insight
30	آ	a	أتم	atam	advent
31	أ	ā	باب	bāb	father
32	سـ	ī	سرير	sarīr	tree
33	قـ	ū	طور	ṭūr	boot
34	عـ	āā	عالم	āālim	-
35	عـ	yī	عيد	yīd	-
36	عـ	ūū	عود	ūūd	-
37	شـ	sh'sh sh-sh	الشمس	ash'shams ash-shams	-
38	أـ	a' or a-	مأسور	ma'sūr	-
39	يـ	i'y or i-y	بئس	bi'ysa bi-ysa	-
40	وـ	u' or u-	لؤلؤ سؤلک	lu'lu' su-lika	-
41		,	أصحاب تکحیل أسهر	aṣ'hāb tak'hīl as'hār	to separate letters to distinguish between sounds represented by letter pairs
42		-	أصحاب تکحیل أسهر	aṣ-hāb tak-hīl as-hār	to separate letters to distinguish between sounds represented by letter pairs
43		superscript	من	mi ^ṣ	to indicate an elision
44		-	كآبة	ka-ābatil manṣar	to break down words when like sounding letters appear with sukun

Appendix E

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. Qurān al-Karīm

B. Tafsīr

1. *Mafātīh al-Ghayb* also known as *Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, Imām Fakhruddīn Muḥammad ibn Ūmar ar-Rāzī (d. 606AH)
2. *Anwāru't Tanzīl wa Asrār at-Ta'wīl*, Abū Sa'yīd Ābdullāh ibn Muḥammad al-Shīrāzī Al-Bayḏāwī (d. 685 AH)
3. *Tafsīr Āzīzī*, Shāh Ābd al-Āzīz Dihlawī
4. *Irshād al-Āql al-Salīm ilā Mazāyā al-Kitāb al-Karīm*, Abū's Sūūd al-Īmādī (d.951 AH)
5. *Madārikū't Tanzīl wa Ḥaqāyiq al-Ta'wīl* also known as *Tafsīr an-Nasafī*, Imām Nasafī (710 AH)
6. *Rūh al-Bayān*, Ismā'yīl Ḥaqqī al-Bursāwī (d.1127 AH)

C. Ḥadīth and Commentaries

7. *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, Abū Ābdullāh Muḥammad ibn Ismā'yīl al-Bukhārī (194 – 256 AH)
8. *Saḥīḥ Muslim*, Imām Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī (204 – 261 AH)
9. *Jāmiy Tirmidhī*, Imām Abū Yīsā Muḥammad ibn Yīsā al-Tirmidhī (d.279 AH)
10. *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, Abū Dawūd Sulaymān ibn al-Ash-āth al-Sajistānī (202-275 AH)
11. *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, Imām Abdullāh ibn Muḥammad al-Qazwīnī ibn Mājah (207-273 AH)
12. *Musnad Imām Aḥmed ibn Ḥanbal*, Imām Aḥmed ibn Ḥanbal (d.241 AH)
13. *Ikmāl al-Mūlim*, Abū Faḍl Qāḏī Iyāḏ ibn Mūsā al-Yaḥsubī al-Mālikī (d.544 AH)
14. *Mishkāṭ al-Maṣābīḥ*, Walīyuddīn ibn Ābdullāh al-Khatīb Al-Ūmarī al-Tabrīzī (died after 737 AH)
15. *Mirqāt al-Mafātīḥ Sharḥ Mishkāṭ al-Maṣābīḥ*, Āllāmah Ālī ibn Sulṭān al-Qārī (d.1014 AH)

D. Āqāyīd and Kalām

16. *Minaḥ ar-Rawḏ al-Az'ḥar Sharḥ Fiqh al-Akbar*, Ālī al-Qārī (d. 1014 AH)
17. *Al-Irshād*, Imām al-Ḥaramayn Ābd al-Malik al-Juwaynī (419-478 AH)
18. *Al-Inṣāf*, Qāḏī Abū Bakr al-Baqillānī (d.403 AH)
19. *Al-Mawāqif*, Imām Aḏududdīn Ābd ar-Raḥmān al-Ījī (d.756 AH)
20. *Sharḥ Al-Mawāqif*, Sayfuddin al-Ab'harī
21. *Sharḥ Al-Mawāqif*, Sayyid Sharīf Ālī al-Jurjānī (d.816 AH)
22. *Hāshiyah Sharḥ Al-Mawāqif*, Ābdul' Ḥakīm Siyālkūti (died after 1275 AH)
23. *Hāshiyah Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, Ḥasan Chalpī Muḥammad Shāh al-Fannārī
24. *Al-Muqaddimāt*, Imām Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Sanūsī (832-895AH)
25. *Sharḥ al-Muqaddimāt*, Imām Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Sanūsī (832-895AH)
26. *Al-Mawāhib ar-Rabbāniyyah fī Sharḥi Muqaddimāt al-Sanūsīyah*, Abū Is'ḥāq Ibrāhīm al-Bannānī
27. *Al-Milal wa'n Niḥal*, Abū Manṣūr Ābd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī (d.429AH)
28. *Al-Milal wa'n Niḥal*, Muḥammad ibn Ābd al-Karīm Al-Shahristānī (479 – 538 AH)
29. *Al-Mubīn fī Māānī Alfāẓ al-Ūlamā al-Mutakallimīn*, Sayfuddīn Al-Āmidī (d.631 AH)
30. *Al-Musāyarah*, Imām Kamāluddīn Ibn al-Humām (d.861 AH)
31. *Al-Musāmarah Sharḥ al-Musāyarah*, Kamāluddīn Muḥamad ibn Abi'sh Sharīf (d.906 AH)
32. *Al-Nibrās*, Ābd al-Āzīz al-Farḥārī
33. *Al-Nukat al-Mufīdah Sharḥ Khuṭbatu'l Āqīdah*, Abdullāh Al-Qayrawānī (310-386 AH) / Muḥammad ibn Salāmah al-Anṣārīa Al-Tūnisī (746)

34. *Al-Qawl al-Sadīd fī Khulf al-Wayīd*, Ālī al-Qārī (d.1014 AH)
35. *Al-Tabṣīr fī'd Dīn wa Tamīz al-Firqati'n Nājiyati án al-Firaq al-Hālikīn*, Imām Abū'l Muẓaffar al-Isfarāyīnī (d.471 AH)
36. *Āqīdah al-Wuṣṭā*, Imām Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Sanūsī (832-895AH)
37. *Sharḥ Al-Wuṣṭā*, Imām Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Sanūsī (832-895AH)
38. *Úmdatū Ahl at-Tawfīq wa't Tasdīd Sharḥ Aqīdatū Ahl al-Tawḥīd* also known as *Sharḥ Sanūsīyah li'l Kubrā*, Imām Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Sanūsī (832-895AH)
39. *Ĥashīyah al-Ĥāmidīyyah ālā Sharḥ al-Kubrā*, Shaykh Ismā'yīl ibn Mūsā al-Ĥāmidī
40. *Ĥashīyah Īlaysh ālā Sharḥ al-Kubrā*, Āllamah Muḥammad Īlaysh al-Mālikī (d.1299 AH)
41. *Qaṣīdah Badyī'l Amālī*, Ālī al-Ūshī (d.569 AH)
42. *Ḍaw al-Māālī Sharḥ Badyī'l Amālī*, Ālī al-Qārī (d.1014 AH)
43. *Dāmān e Bāgh e Sub'ḥan as-Subbūḥ*, Imām Aḥmed Ridā al-Barelwī (1272-1340AH/1856-1920 CE)
44. *Al-Farq Bayn al-Firaq*, Abū Maṣṣūr Ābd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī (d.429AH)
45. *Iḏā'atu'l Dujnā fī Iyṭīqādī Ahli's Sunnah*, Aḥmed al-Maqirri al-Mālikī (992-10141 AH/184-1631CE)
46. *Rāyīḥatu'l Jannah Sharḥ Iḏā'atu'l Dujnā fī Iyṭīqādī Ahli's Sunnah*, Imām Ābd al-Ghanī an-Nablūsī al-Ĥanafī (d.1143AH)
47. *Jawharah al-Tawḥīd*, Burḥānuddīn Ibrāhīm al-Laqqānī al-Mālikī (d.1041 AH)
48. *Sharḥ Jawharah al-Tawḥīd*, Aḥmed ibn Muḥammad al-Ṣāwī al-Khalwatī(1175-1241AH)
49. *Tuḥfatu'l Murīd Sharḥ Jawharah at-Tawḥīd*, Ibrāhīm al-Bajūrī (1198 – 1272 AH)
50. *Kifāyatu'l Murīd* also known as *Al-Jazāyirīyyah*, Imām Aḥmed ibn Ābdullāh al-Zawwāwī al-Jazāyirī (800-884 AH)
51. *Al-Manhaj al-Sadīd Sharḥ Kifāyatu'l Murīd*, Imām Sanūsī also known as *Sharḥ Al-Jazāyirīyyah*, Imām Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Sanūsī (832-895AH)
52. *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, Imām Abu'l Ḥasan al-Ashārī (d.330 AH)
53. *Nihāyat al-Iqdām fī Īlm al-Kalām*, Muḥammad ibn Abdu'l Karīm al-Shahristānī (479 – 538 AH)
54. *Qam'a al-Mubīn Li Āmāl al-Mukadh'dhibīn*, Imām Aḥmed Ridā al-Barelwī (1272-1340AH/1856-1920 CE)
55. *Sharḥ ad-Dawwānī ālā Āqāyīd al-Ādudīyyah*, Muḥammad ibn As'ād as-Ṣiddīq al-Dawwānī
56. *Sharḥ Āqāyīd an-Nasafīyyah*, Saāduddīn Masūūd al-Taftāzānī (712-793 AH)
57. *Ĥāshīyyah Sharḥ Āqāyīd an-Nasafīyyah*, Āllamah Aḥmed ibn Mūsā al-Khayālī (died after 862)
58. *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣīd*, Sáduddīn Masūūd Taftāzānī (712-793 AH)
59. *Ṣughrā al-Ṣughrā*, Imām Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Sanūsī (832-895AH)
60. *Sharḥ Ṣughrā al-Ṣughrā*, Imām Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Sanūsī (832-895AH)
61. *Sub'ḥan as-Subbūḥ án Kadhibi Áybun Maqbūḥ*, Imām Aḥmed Ridā al-Barelwī
62. *Tawālīy al-Anwār*, Abū Sa'yīd Ābdullāh ibn Muḥammad al-Shīrāzī Al-Bayḏāwī (d. 685 AH)
63. *Umm al-Barāhīn* also known as *Al-Sanūsīyah al-Ṣughrā*, Imām Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Sanūsī (832-895AH)
64. *Sharḥ Umm al-Barāhīn*, Muḥammad ibn al-Manṣūr al-Hud-Hudī
65. *Ĥāshīyah al-Sharqāwī ālā Sharḥ al-Hud'hudī ālā Umm al-Barāhīn*, Imām Ābdullāh al-Ĥījāzī al-Sharqāwī
66. *Ĥashīyah Sharḥ Umm al-Barāhīn*, Aḥmed ibn Ārafah al-Dasūqī (d.1230 AH)
67. *Usūl al-Dīn*, Abdu'l Qāhir al-Baghdādī (d.429AH)
68. *Asās al-Taqdīs*, Imām Rāzī
69. *Talkhīṣ al-Muḥaṣṣal*, Nasir Tusi.
70. *Muḥaṣṣal Afkār al-Mutaqaddīmīn wa'l Muta-akh'khirīn*, Imām Rāzī
71. *Iyṭīqādāt Firaq al-Muslimīn wa'l Mushrikīn*, Imām Rāzī
72. *Lumá al-Adillah*, Imām al-Ĥaramayn Ābd al-Malik al-Juwaynī
73. *Kitāb Al-Lumá* , Imām Abū'l Ḥasan Ālī Al-Ashārī.

E. Fiqh and Usūl al-Fiqh

74. *Al-Durr al-Thamīn Sharḥ Murshid al-Muḥyīn*, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmed known as Mayārah (d. 1072 AH)
75. *Murshid al-Muḥyīn āla'd Ḍarūrī min Ūlūmi'd Dīn*, Imām Abū Muḥammad Ābd al-Wāḥid ibn Āāshir al-Fāsī (d.1040 AH)
76. *Musallam al-Thubūt*, Muḥibbullāh al-Bihāri (d.1119 AH)
77. *Fawātiḥ ar-Raḥmūt Sharḥ Musallam al-Thubūt*, Ābd al-Āli Muḥammad ibn Niḥamuddin Sihālwi (d.1225 AH)
78. *Radd al-Muḥtār*, Imām Ibn Āābidīn Shāmī (1198-1252 AH)
79. *Al-Wajīz fī Usūl al-Fiqh*, Dr. Wahbah Al-Zuḥaylī

F. Lexicons

80. *Tāj al-Ārūs*, Imām Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī (1145-1205 AH/ 1732-1790 CE)
81. *At-Tārīfāt*, Sharīf Āli Al-Jurjānī (d.816 AH)

G. Poetry

82. *Ḥadāyiq e Bakshish*, Alāḥazrat Imām Aḥmed Riḍā al-Baraylawī (1272-1340AH/1856-1920 CE)

H. Taṣawwuf

83. *Iḥyā'a Ūlūm al-Dīn*, Imām Muḥammad Ghazālī (d.505 AH)
84. *Itḥāf al-Sādah al-Muttaqīn*, Imām Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī (1145-1205 AH/ 1732-1790 CE)
85. *Miftāḥ al-Falāḥ wa Miṣbāḥ al-Arwāḥ fī Dhikrillāhi'l Karīm al-Fattāḥ*, Imām Ibn Āṭāyillāh as-Sakandarī (d.709 AH)
86. *Qūt al-Qulūb*, Abu Ṭālib al-Makkī (d.386 AH)
87. *Al-Asnā fī Sharḥi Asmā'a Allāh al-Ḥusnā*, Imām Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Sanūsī (832-895AH)

I. Others

88. *Al-Iḥlām bi Ḥudūd al-Islām*, Qāḍī Iyāḍ (d.544 AH)
89. *Al-Iḥlām li Qawāṭiy al-Islām*, Imām Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī (909-974 AH)
90. *Lawāmiy al-Bayyināt Sharḥ Asmā'a Allāh wa's Ṣifāt*, Imām Fakhruddīn Rāzī (d.606 AH)
91. *Ashrāṭ as-Sāāh*, Muḥammad ibn Ābd ar-Rasul al-Barzanjī (1040 – 1177 AH)
92. *Barāḥīn e Qaṭiāh*, Khalīl Aḥmed Sahāranpūrī
93. *Ek-Rozah*, Ismāyīl Dihlawī
94. *Fayslah Haft-Mas'alah*, Ḥajī Imdādullāh Muhājir Makkī
95. *Juhd al-Muqil*, Maḥmūd al-Ḥasan Devbandī
96. *Kanz al-Fawāyid*, Cf *Subḥān as-Subbūḥ*.
97. www.wikipedia.org

Appendix F

ANOTHER DECEPTION

Posted Today, 12:49 PM

Assalamu alaykum,

In *al-Mawaqif fi 'Ilm al-Kalam* by al-Ijī, he discusses the reasons why both the Mu'tazilites and Ash'arites believe in the impossibility of falsehood for Allah. He concludes, since the debate with the Mu'tazilites is only about the uttered-speech, the first two arguments (below) are inapplicable and it is the third, the Prophet's own confirmation of it, that we must rely on. The book, without al-Jurjani's commentary, is available [here](#).

يمتنع عليه الكذب اتفاقا

أما عند المعتزلة فلوجهين. الأول أنه قبيح وهو لا يفعل القبيح وهو بناء على أصلهم في اثبات حكم العقل. الثاني أنه مناف لمصلحة العالم والأصلح واجب عليه. والجواب منع وجوب الأصلح.

وأما عندنا فثلاثة أوجه

الأول أنه تنقض والتنقض على الله تعالى محال وأيضا فيلزم أن تكون أكمل منه في بعض الأوقات. واعلم أنه لم يظهر لي فرق بين التنقض في الفعل وبين القبح العقلي فإن التنقض في الأفعال هو القبح العقلي بعينه وإنما تختلف العبارة.

الثاني أنه لو اتصف بالكذب لكان كذبه قبيحا إذ لا يقوم الحادث بذاته تعالى. فيلزم أن يمتنع عليه الصدق فإن ما ثبت قبحه امتنع عدمه والالتزام باطل فإنا نعلم بالضرورة أن من علم شيئا أمكن أن يخبر عنه على ما هو عليه وهذا إنما يدل على كون الكلام النفسي صدقا وأما هذه الجبارات فلا.

الثالث وعليه الاعتماد خير النبي عليه السلام وذلك يعلم بالضرورة من الدين. فإن قيل إنما يدل تصديقه على الصدق إذا امتنع عليه الكذب فيلزم الدورز قلنا التصديق بالمعجزة

"Lying for Him is impossible by agreement (of the Ash'aris and the Mu'tazilites). For the Mu'tazilites this is for two reasons. First, it is ugly and He does not do something ugly. This is based on their principle of affirming the judgement of the intellect (in establishing good and bad). Second, it is not something beneficial to the creation, and Allah must do what is optimum [*aslah*]. We respond this is not necessary.

"As for us, lying is impossible for three reasons:

"First, it is a defect [*naqs*] and defects are impossible for Allah. Furthermore it would mean we are sometimes more perfect than Him. Know that to me there is no difference between a rational defect in Divine Acts [as the uttered-speech is a Divine Act as opposed to the self-speech] and rational ugliness since defects in acts is the very same thing as rationally ugly. This is only a difference in terminology [so this argument is rejected as a Mu'tazilite one when it comes to the uttered-speech].

"Second, if He is attributed with falsehood, His falsehood would be pre-eternal since a temporal entity does not subsist in His Essence. So it necessitates the impossibility of truth for Him because that which the pre-eternality of which is established its non-existence is impossible. This concomitant is absurd because we know it is possible for one who knows something to narrate it truthfully. This only proves the self-speech is true but not the uttered-speech.

"Third, and we rely on this, the report of the Prophet, and that is known by certainty to be from the religion. If it is said the truth of the Prophet is only proven by Allah confirming him so it is impossible for Him to lie since circularity will result. We say: his confirmation is by miracle [and not necessarily Allah's speech]."

The last point refutes the argument that this is circular as the Prophet's own vindication is through his miracles so his confirmation of the words of revelation, i.e. the uttered-speech, affirm their truthfulness according to al-Ijī.

Thus, al-Ijī denies the "rational impossibility" of falsehood in the uttered-speech, but affirms its contingent impossibility.

This post has been edited by [sunnimuslim](#): Today, 12:56 PM

Appendix G

EXONERATION OF SHAYKH BUTI

Faithless people, claiming that Shaykh Buti also believed in their heresy, were circulating a statement. When this was brought to his notice, he disavowed such an attribution vehemently and in such words:

« عودةعقيدة

نسب إلى فضيلتكم في أحد المواقع القول بأن الكذب في حق الله تعالى ليس مستحيلاً ذاتياً وأنه تحت قدرته. ولكنه تعالى أوجب على نفسه أن لا يكذب. وهذا القول ترجم إلى الإنكليزية ونريد أن نتأكد منكم مدى صحة نسبة هذا القول إليكم

أجاب عنه: أ.د. محمد سعيد رمضان البوطي

إن أحداً لم يوجه إليّ هذا السؤال. وأعتقد أن أحداً لم يواجهني ولن يواجهني بمثل هذه السفالة في السؤال. ليس في الناس من يجهل أن الكذب من الصفات الذميمة. وليس في المؤمنين بالله من يجهل أن الله متصف بصفات الكمال كلها ومنزه عن سائر صفات النقصان. وقدرته جل جلاله على شيء ما لا يعني بالضرورة إمكان اتصافه به. على أن قدرته إنما تتعلق بالممكنات ولا تتعلق بالمستحيالات.

محمد سعيد رمضان البوطي

Question: A statement has been ascribed to your kind self that you have said that falsehood is not intrinsically impossible for Allāh tāālā and is included in His Divine Power. However, He has made it necessary upon Himself to not utter a lie. This statement has been translated in English and is available on a website. We wish to ascertain the authenticity of this attribution to your kind self.

Reply by: Dr. Muḥammad Saʿyīd Ramaḍān Al-Būṭī

Nobody can even think of asking such a question; and I believe no one has ever brought such a contemptible and base question to my notice. [and may no one ask me in the future].

None is ignorant of the fact that falsehood is a despicable attribute; And none who believes in Allāh tāālā should be ignorant of [the principle] that the Attributes of Allāh tāālā are those of perfection and that He is transcendent from every attribute of flaw. His Divine Power shall not be attributed with a vain thing. This, apart from the fact that His Power is concerned only with contingent things [*mumkinat*] and not impossible things [*mustahīlat*].

May Allāh tāālā reward Shaykh Buti for clearing this confusion; and give him health and strength to continue serving this *ummah*.

AFTERWORD

When I began writing this, I did not expect the article to be this long. Initially, I thought of writing a few pages with kalām terms and quotes from *úlamā* on the issue, for the benefit of some brothers who had asked – but the scope kept expanding. Alḥamdulillah, for making this easy for us.

I started writing on the 18th of March 2010 [2nd of Rabiý al-Thānī 1431AH] and finished a draft by mid May. Thereafter, I kept revising and adding more sections and appendices until finally, the first version of the document was released Alḥamdulillāh, on the 5th of June 2010 [22nd Jumādā al-Ākhirah, 1431 AH].

Many typographical errors and grammatical mistakes have been corrected in this second version. Even though the actual process of revision took only about 15-20 hours, it spanned over a few weeks until it was finally completed on the 8th of October, 2010 [29th Shawwāl, 1431 AH] *wa lillāhi'l ḥamd*.

Thanks are due to brothers who consented to review the document and enriched it with valuable suggestions and feedback. May Allāh táālā reward them for their help.

O Allāh, guide us and keep us on the straight path. We seek your refuge from an ugly end and an evil state – in both our beliefs and deeds. We ask Thee, O Allāh to grant us a beautiful end and a beautiful hereafter.

Only Allāh táālā gives guidance.

